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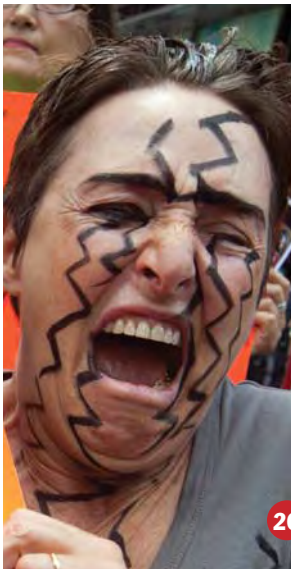
Barbarism in Philadelphia

JON A. SHIELDS on the crimes of Dr. Kermit Gosnell



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Thatcher Derangement Syndrome

Americans were surprised—well, shocked, really—to see the public manifestations of hatred in England when Margaret Thatcher died. There were images of people celebrating in the streets, tweets and blog posts gleefully predicting damnation, even the Rt. Hon. Glenda Jackson, M.P., on a verbal rampage in the House of Commons. This seemed a curiously ugly response to the death of a frail woman in her late eighties.

On the one hand, THE SCRAPBOOK was shocked, too. We are unabashed admirers of Lady Thatcher and think the question of her historic influence and distinction is long settled. But we also tend to be a little more publicly polite on this side of the Atlantic: Most Americans find the rough and tumble of the British Parliament—rude interruptions, derisive laughter, cries of “resign!”—a little disconcerting, very different from the generally sober (and slightly dull) atmosphere of Congress.

On the other hand, if you take a

close look at the anti-Thatcher demonstrators, you would find yourself, as THE SCRAPBOOK was, oddly comforted. This was hardly a groundswell of British public opinion; in

chists, earnest cranks, what used to be called juvenile delinquents—reminded THE SCRAPBOOK of Lady Thatcher’s remark that the character and language of her most violent critics

assured her she was doing the right thing.

It is probably true that the I-hate-Thatcher spectacles were evidence of change in British life: When the other “controversial” prime minister of the past century died—that would be David Lloyd George in 1945—such public demonstrations of bumptiousness and malice would have been inconceivable. But trends in public manners evolve, and wax and wane. Go back another century,

to 1830, and the greatest British hero of the time, the Duke of Wellington, was physically attacked in public, and his house in London besieged by a mob, because of his politics.

Wellington, of course, was known as the Iron Duke. From the Iron Duke to the Iron Lady, there will always be mud at the feet of giants. ♦



The coffin of Margaret Thatcher is carried out of St. Paul's Cathedral.

fact, quite the opposite. The great majority of Britons seemed appropriately saddened, certainly respectful, even nostalgic. Margaret Thatcher’s political opponents, with one or two exceptions, gave the lady her due, graciously acknowledging her importance to modern Britain. By contrast, the demonstrators—bearded anar-

Moonbeam in China

California’s retread governor Jerry Brown traveled to China last week with some 90 of his closest friends. (According to *Los Angeles Times* columnist George Skelton, Brown’s party included “mostly special interests . . . willing to pay \$10,000 each, plus trans-Pacific airfare.”) The vacation . . . sorry, the “trade and investment mission” included a lot of schmoozing and photo-ops. It also—serendipitously,

we are certain—happened around the time of Brown’s 75th birthday.

As has become routine for a certain breed of technocratic liberal, Brown took care to praise China’s autocratic political system while he was there. Anyone who’s ever read a Thomas Friedman column in the *New York Times* knows the argument: The Chinese, in their infinite wisdom, know how to “get things done”—this in contrast to America, what with pesky annoyances like constitutional checks and balances and democratic ac-

countability. “People here do stuff,” Brown rhapsodized. “They don’t sit around and mope and process and navel-gaze.” Call THE SCRAPBOOK old-fashioned, but it seems to us that while it’s one thing for a newspaper columnist to sing the praises of Communist “efficiency,” it’s rather more unseemly for an elected governor to do the same.

Brown really likes what he saw in China; compared with California, the Chinese are “moving at Mach speed,” he lamented. Then again, just

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last week, as the governor was junketing through the Middle Kingdom, a front-page story in the *Financial Times* sounded the alarm on “Out-of-Control [Chinese government] Debt.” The *FT* reported, “Provinces, cities, counties and villages across China are now estimated to owe between Rmb10tn and Rmb20tn”—that’s \$1.6 trillion to \$3.2 trillion, or “20-40 percent of the size of the economy.”

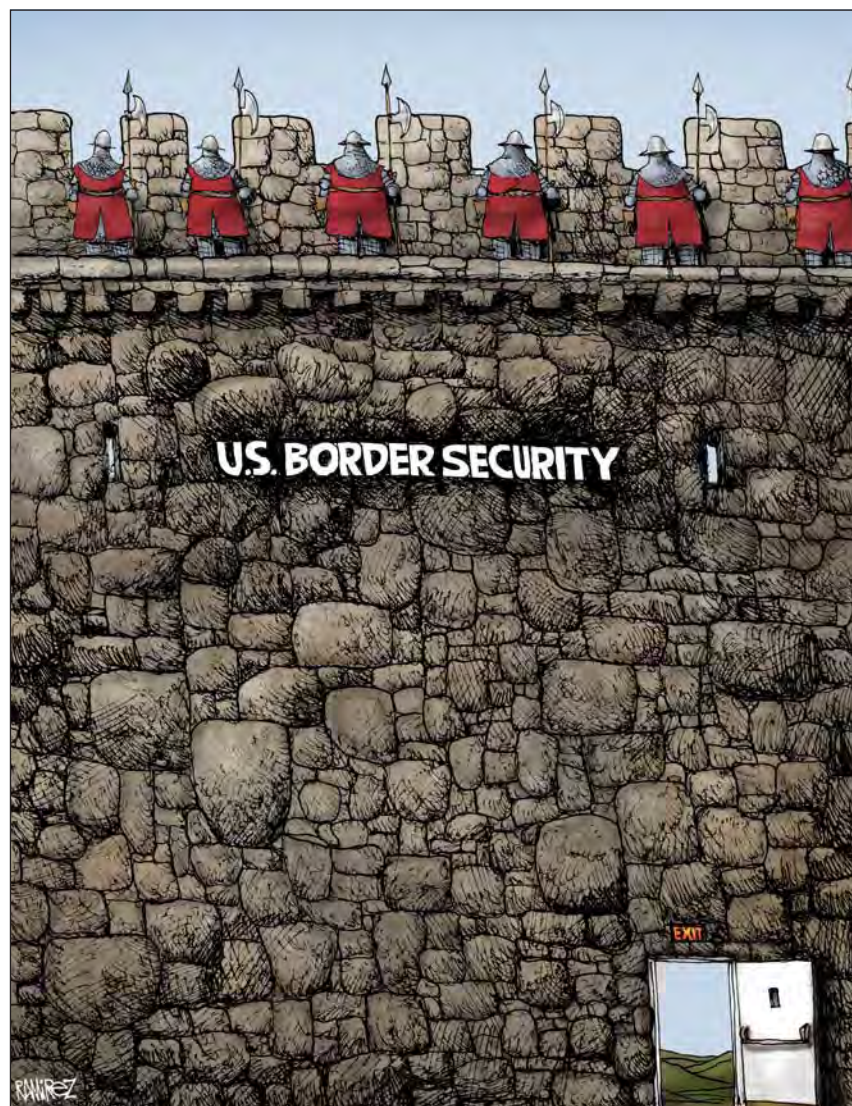
So take heart, Governor Brown: In at least one respect, China is following California’s lead—going into debt at Mach speed. ♦

Dollar-a-Year Man

THE SCRAPBOOK had an epiphany this past week, and thanks to the unlikeliest of inspirations: our dolorous secretary of state, John Forbes Kerry. Readers will recall that Secretary Kerry, as a gesture of sympathy to federal employees during the sequester, announced that he would set aside 5 percent of his annual salary to be given away. In this he was joined by President Obama and Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, both of whom returned 5 percent of their wages to the government. But in Kerry’s case, this would be a charitable fund for State Department employees.

Needless to say, everyone has been impressed by the secretary’s selfless act—not least the State Department spokesman, who (according to Reuters) explained that “we’re still looking at the best choice, and whether all of the money will go to one [charity] or whether it’ll be spread” among several charities.

Now, it’s all very well for John Kerry to make a public gesture of selflessness during the political chess match between the White House and congressional Republicans. That’s how the game is played, and seeking what passes for the moral high ground is business as usual. But then it hit us: Five percent of John Kerry’s annual salary (\$183,500) is an impressive, but by no means princely, sum (\$9,175). And divided two or three ways, it’s practically an



insult from a donor of John Kerry’s personal wealth.

Which leads THE SCRAPBOOK to this question: Why does John Kerry accept any salary at all for his federal service? This is a man who is not only demonstrably loaded in his own right—the richest member of the Senate in his time—but also married to the widow of an heir to the H.J. Heinz fortune. Kerry’s net worth has been variously estimated to be between \$184 million and \$288 million. Translation: His \$183,500 annual federal salary amounts, in Kerry dollars, to a generous tip. (And the 5 percent of it donated for sequester PR is the equivalent of THE SCRAPBOOK’s pledging for the relief

of the poor the spare change found under its sofa cushions.)

As it happens, the law forbids the federal government from employing volunteers, and so in times past, especially during national emergencies, when wealthy people have donated their services to the nation, they have been paid a nominal \$1 annual wage to satisfy the law. During the two world wars such well-heeled volunteers as Bernard Baruch, W. Averell Harriman, James Forrestal, and Henry Kaiser became known as “dollar-a-year men,” and outside Washington, the tradition lives on with certain mayors (Michael Bloomberg) and governors (Mitt Romney, Arnold Schwarzenegger).

They are entitled to their salaries, of course, and generally earn them; but these men recognize that, at a certain level of wealth, such compensation is personally meaningless and publicly wasteful.

Of course, far be it from THE SCRAPBOOK to insist that Secretary of State John Kerry forgo the taxpayer-funded wage to which he is entitled: Even when your wealth is measured in the hundreds of millions, an extra \$183,500 never hurts. We would draw the line, however, at self-praise for a sacrifice that, by any measure, isn't really a sacrifice. ♦

Honor System

More and more of our political activity seems to be about making people feel good, so why should gun regulation be any exception? We were looking at the myriad regulations in Connecticut's new gun law, for instance, and noticed

its prohibition on loading more than 10 rounds into a large capacity magazine. THE SCRAPBOOK often encounters regulations it considers pointless, but this may set a new standard in naiveté: The law does not ban ownership of large capacity magazines, or using them—you just can't load more than 10 bullets at a time. New York has a similar new regulation, which caps total bullets loaded at seven. Somehow we doubt would-be mass murderers will feel honor-bound not to fully load their guns at the beginning of a shooting spree, seeing as how they're already unmoved by prohibitions on murder.

Obviously, such regulations will do nothing to prevent another Newtown and will succeed only in making life a little more difficult for the law-abiding. Fans of the BBC's *Yes, Prime Minister* will recognize the trap legislators in Connecticut and New York have fallen into: "Something must be done; this is something, therefore, we must do it." ♦



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Lives of the Eccentrics

In 1859, John Stuart Mill published *On Liberty*, a book that included, among its other peculiarities, a complaint that Victorian society was destroying eccentricity, and thereby individuality, and thereby freedom.

I've always liked Macaulay's response—a snort that Mill was crying fire in the midst of Noah's flood. In truth, England, during that strange century between the Napoleonic Wars and World War I, had the wealth, worldwide scope, and cultural confidence to allow what may be the greatest goofiness ever known. London alone held thousands of cranks, and all around the globe, the sun never set on true British nuttiness.

The most interesting part of eccentricity may be just how wasteful it usually is. Real eccentricity, I mean, the genuine, whole-life thing, not the mere attempt to cultivate a rebel charm or indulge a little quirkiness. Authentic eccentricity—the oddball in full—devotes itself to wasting time: the pouring of more into containers than those containers should actually hold. Intelligence is the key, often enough, but also charisma, interest, talent. Any human excellence, from a genius for Sanskrit to a gift for tiddlywinks, can be pursued far off to the side of what culture places at the center of human concern.

As, for instance, "On Strengthening the Hand of Austria-Hungary," the essay Allan B. Calhamer published in 1960, undeterred by the fact that the empire had come to an end in 1918. And he's surely right: The threat to garrison Tyrolia early in 1901 would have aided Austria-Hungary's diplomatic efforts with Italy.

Would have aided, that is, if the dangerous balance of European powers that would explode in 1914 had been merely a bloodless board game. And that's what prewar Europe appeared to

Calhamer, when he invented the game Diplomacy in 1954 while a student at Harvard Law School.

Personally, for all the hours I wasted playing Diplomacy, I blame Halford Mackinder, whose 1904 essay "The Geographical Pivot of History" Calhamer read as a Harvard undergraduate—a wonderfully reductionist and nutball theory that



history is nothing more than the geopolitical struggle to control central Europe and Asia. Still, in his account of the game's origins, Calhamer equally attributes the idea to Sidney Bradshaw Fay, his professor and author of the 1928 *Origins of World War One*, a curiously pro-German (and anti-Austro-Hungarian) volume that traced the disastrous fantasies of European diplomacy after 1901.

What makes Diplomacy different from most board games is that it allows no role for chance. Played on a map of Europe, the territories of seven great powers facing one another, the game uses no dice or luck of the draw. With its simple military action balanced almost perfectly, the key to Diplomacy is the deals the players

make, promising between turns to support one another. And then keeping those promises or breaking them when the turn actually comes. Henry Kissinger is said to have loved the game, along with John F. Kennedy, Walter Cronkite, and thousands of time-wasting college students ever since.

After dropping out of Harvard Law in boredom, Calhamer self-published Diplomacy in 1959, eventually licensing the game to Avalon Hill and other companies. Despite selling over 300,000 copies, it never brought him a fortune, and most of his life was passed in mild eccentricity: a very intelligent man who camped for a while at Walden Pond, worked as a park ranger, and invented a few other games (all unpublished). Imagining he had a deep understanding of strategy, Sylvia hired him in the 1960s to analyze technology in future military conflicts, but he lasted only six years before boredom overtook him again.

From the 1970s until his retirement in the 1990s, he delivered mail in his hometown of La Grange Park, Illinois—entertaining himself along his route by factoring into primes the license-plate numbers of the cars he passed. He would occasionally attend Diplomacy conventions, but he was never a champion player: too kind-hearted, by all reports, to use the cut-throat tactics that victory requires.

Allan Calhamer died in February at the age of 81, to a surprising number of obituaries around the nation—almost all from writers who had fond (or bitter) memories of playing his game. And yet, to read those obituaries is not primarily to see a game inventor like Alfred Butts with Scrabble or Charles Darrow with Monopoly. It is to observe instead a genuine American eccentric—a man who happened to invent a popular game and who devoted his high intelligence to mild and modest pursuits, pouring attention and interest into bottles too small to contain them.

A happy life, you have to think.

JOSEPH BOTTUM

Civilization and Barbarism

*And now, what's going to happen to us without barbarians?
They were, those people, a kind of solution.*

How many times in the last century have these concluding lines of C. P. Cavafy's famous 1898 poem, "Waiting for the Barbarians," been quoted? How many modern intellectuals have pondered the subversive implications of that sophisticated question?

It's an interesting question. But it turned out to be a hypothetical one. The 20th century didn't lack for barbarians. Indeed, modern barbarism proved more dangerous than the old-fashioned kind. As Churchill put it in his great House of Commons speech on June 18, 1940, after the fall of France, rallying Britain against the National Socialist tyranny in Germany: "But if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new dark age made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the lights of perverted science."

Of course, Churchill and Britain—joined by the United States and the Soviet Union—prevailed. We averted a new dark age.

But we didn't enter a new age of enlightenment. The Soviet threat replaced the Nazi one. The barbarism of Mao and Pol Pot matched the worst of what had gone before. And the end of the Cold War didn't mean an end to the assaults on civilization—foremost among them the attacks of 9/11.

The bombs on Patriots' Day in Boston brought a fresh reminder, if any were needed, that there are still those who would send us into a new dark age. And the trial of the murderer-abortionist Dr. Kermit Gosnell in Philadelphia reminds us that other barbarous things are being done in our midst. So there are still, in the enlightened and progressive 21st century, barbarians at the gates—and, sadly, within the gates.

The barbarians within the gates should lead us to reconsider certain uncivilized aspects of our own society—such as the unfettered abortion regime of *Roe v. Wade*, which both empowered Gosnell and removed barriers to his barbarism. It's not fashionable today, even among con-

servatives, to make Ronald Reagan's pro-life arguments, or to profess concern for civic virtues, as Margaret Thatcher did. Who today explains that the abortion regime of *Roe* is one unworthy of a decent country, or that uncertainties about how far government can and should go in protecting unborn children are no excuse for a failure to protect them at all? Who points out that how we treat the unborn has implications for how we treat the born? The silence of the liberals about Gosnell is understandable. His deeds raise uncomfortable questions for and about modern liberalism.

But what is the excuse for the silence of conservative political leaders?

Haven't conservatives also lapsed into silence about the barbarians outside? Bush's "war on terror" has been much mocked, and not just by liberals. Of course the idea is too abstract. Still, on the big question Bush was right. Terror is real, and terrorists must be defeated. Bush's failure was to stop short in 2004, when he had the terror sponsors on their heels, and to allow them to regain momentum. That momentum has accelerated under President Obama.

Consider the attitude of the Obama administration, as revealed in this exchange in the White House press room

last Wednesday, two days after the Boston terror attack. A journalist asked White House spokesman Jay Carney the following question:

I send my deepest condolence to the victims and families in Boston. President Obama said that what happened in Boston was an act of terrorism. I would like to ask: Do you consider the U.S. bombing of civilians in Afghanistan earlier this month that killed—that left 11 children and a woman killed a form of terrorism? Why, or why not?

The White House spokesman's answer?

Well, I would have to know more about the incident. And obviously the Department of Defense would have answers to your questions on this matter. We have more than 60,000 U.S. troops involved in a war in Afghanistan, a war that began when the United States was attacked in an attack that was organized on the soil of Afghanistan by al Qaeda, by Osama bin Laden, and others. And 3,000



people were killed in that attack. And it has been the president's objective, once he took office, to make clear what our goals are in Afghanistan, and that is to disrupt, dismantle, and ultimately defeat al Qaeda. With that as our objective to provide enough assistance to Afghan national security forces and the Afghan government to allow them to take over security for themselves, and that process is under way and the United States has withdrawn a substantial number of troops and we're in the process of drawing down further as we hand over security lead to Afghan forces. And it is certainly the case, but I refer you to the Defense Department for details, that we take great care in the prosecution of this war, and we are very mindful of what our objectives are.

Appalling. We have a White House spokesman who seems incapable of saying: We regret any inadvertent killing of civilians in Afghanistan, but American troops fighting there are not engaged in terrorism. We have a White House that lacks moral clarity about the world in which we live. Moral clarity by itself isn't sufficient to produce a successful national security strategy, or for that matter successful domestic policies. But a degree of moral clarity and candor is surely necessary. A political leadership that cannot speak of barbarism with the same confidence with which medicine speaks, for example, of cancer, cannot understand political phenomena for what they are and cannot deal with the threats to civilization as they exist.

In the 19th century, liberals like John Stuart Mill could write of civilization and barbarism. In the last half of the 20th century, as liberalism degenerated, it fell to conservatives like Reagan and Thatcher to call the evil empire by its proper name, and to stand up to it. Do we in the 21st century have what it takes to confront and defeat today's barbarians? It's not a sophisticated question. But it's a real one.

—William Kristol

2014 or Bust

Things are looking up for Republicans. President Obama's agenda is collapsing before our eyes. Obama is pointing to the 2014 midterm elections to capture the House and revive his presidency. "My job is not simply to occupy the Oval Office," he said at a San Francisco fundraiser. "My job is to make sure we move the country forward, and I think we can best do that if Nancy Pelosi is speaker of the House once again." Obama said Pelosi is "thoughtful" and "visionary" and "never lets ideology cloud her judgment."

In 2014, Obama will be playing on Republican turf. The prospects of putting Pelosi back in charge are slim.

Democrats would need to net 17 House seats. But the outlook at the moment is that Republicans could gain as many as 5 or 6 seats. Or more if the six-year itch takes hold, punishing Obama midway through his second term. The average sixth-year pickup by the "out" party since 1934 is 28 seats.



Republicans have a better chance of winning the Senate than Democrats have of taking back the House. But skepticism that Republicans can pull this off is warranted, since they blew easy chances to grab the Senate in 2010 and 2012. Yet the opportunity is there in 2014. A net of six seats is required, and seven Democrats in red states are either retiring or seeking reelection.

There's a wild card in 2014—Obama. Presidents normally don't inject themselves in sixth-year midterms as aggressively as Obama is promising to do. Few Democrats will want him to campaign personally for them. That's not where he can help. But on fundraising, turnout, and shaping the issues in 2014, he might.

Obama has told the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee he'll do eight fundraisers for them in 2013 and no telling how many next year. And Organizing for America—his reelection campaign now functioning as the president's personal PAC—will try to create voter turnout next year that's more like 2012 than 2010. The goal is to prevent Republicans from dominating the 2014 elections as they did in taking over the House in the 2010 midterms.

Meanwhile, the president has set a trap for Republicans. He's agreed to reduce annual cost-of-living increases for Social Security as a (small) concession to justify a new round of negotiations for a grand bargain on taxes, spending, and the deficit. House and Senate Republicans have wisely rejected new talks, but this allows Obama to tar them as obstructionists who oppose serious deficit reduction to protect the rich from higher taxes.

That's just the beginning. He'll accuse them of obstructing gun control legislation, which died in the Senate last week with the defeat of expanded background checks of

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gun buyers. If immigration reform fails, Obama will blame Republicans for obstructing it, too.

Yet it's unlikely Obama will have a decisive effect on the outcome in 2014. The deck is heavily stacked against him. History, the weak economy, and the arrival of Obamacare are on the GOP's side. So is what the head of the House Republican campaign committee, Rep. Greg Walden of Oregon, calls "tiredness" of Obama. Presidential appeal atrophies in second terms.

The best thing going for the GOP in 2014 in Senate and House races is that few of their candidates are vulnerable. David Wasserman of the Cook Political Report calls this "a lack of Republican exposure." Every Republican Senate seat appears safe or close to it, and only a half-dozen House members are in districts that lean even slightly Democratic.

Wasserman lists 204 House seats as solidly Republican and another 28 as "likely" or "lean" Republican. That's a total of 232, the same number Republicans currently hold and 14 more than a House majority of 218. Two Republican and 6 Democratic seats are tossups.

To win six Senate seats, Republicans are targeting Democrats in red states. West Virginia and South Dakota each have a vacant seat, and Republicans have a strong candidate for each. Arkansas has trended Republican more than any state in the past three years, and Republicans

have attractive contenders for their Senate nomination there as well.

In the other red states with Democratic senators, the field of Republican candidates is still growing. Only Montana looks reasonably safe, for Democratic senator Max Baucus. Alaska is lopsidedly Republican, putting Sen. Mark Begich in jeopardy. In North Carolina in 2012, Republicans won everything. Ousting Sen. Kay Hagan in 2014 would complete their sweep. In Louisiana, Sen. Mary Landrieu is the only statewide Democrat to have escaped a Republican onslaught—so far.

As good as all this looks for Republicans, it's wise to remember that the future in politics is never a straight line projection of the present. The midterm elections are 18 months away. At this time in 2009, Democrats believed they were in fine shape for the 2010 midterms. They lost 63 House and 6 Senate seats.

Republicans need to be smart for a change. They can't afford to be passive and assume the history of sixth-year midterms will carry them. To counter Obama, they should offer alternatives to the Obama policies they've defeated. And if the implementation of Obamacare is a train wreck, they should speak more in sorrow than anger. Nobody likes a gloater.

—Fred Barnes

What Small Businesses Want ...

By Thomas J. Donohue

President and CEO
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

America's 27 million small businesses represent 99% of U.S. employers and account for three-quarters of all new jobs created. The smallest of businesses stand to make the biggest impact on economic growth and job creation.

In order to remain a powerful collective engine for growth, small businesses need a little help from Washington. A recent U.S. Chamber of Commerce survey of small business owners found that a whopping 87% are looking for more certainty from government. Our leaders can help by putting an end to the uncertainty that hampers hiring, stifles growth, and halts investment.

Small business owners and entrepreneurs want confidence that their taxes won't be hiked and that compliance will be simple and predictable. They want to know what the health care law will cost and require of their businesses so

that they can plan accordingly. They want to know what regulations they'll face and have confidence that those rules are based on sound science and good data and will provide more benefit than cost.

They want to see lawmakers move forward with an ambitious trade agenda that will open up new opportunities for exports and expansion. They want to know that Washington will smartly leverage domestic energy resources to help keep costs low and supplies stable in the United States.

Above all, they want to know that our leaders can work together to solve the significant fiscal and budget challenges facing our nation. Small businesses must make tough decisions every day—they expect no less from their lawmakers.

With some certainty on these issues, small businesses will be able to hire, invest, innovate, and expand with greater confidence. This, in turn, will drive stronger growth across the economy.

What employers don't want is

government exerting too much power or control over their businesses. Only 5% of the small business owners surveyed were interested in "government assistance." The government's legitimate role in business is to set the rules of the road; ensure health, safety, and lawful behavior; and foster a policy environment that allows our free market economy to thrive. Beyond that, government can help most by staying out of the way.

Small businesses know what they want—and many of them are not afraid to ask for it. Next week, the U.S. Chamber will welcome hundreds of owners and entrepreneurs to America's Small Business Summit in Washington. Together, we will send our leaders and lawmakers a clear message: When small businesses succeed, America succeeds! So let's give them what they want—and need—to do it.

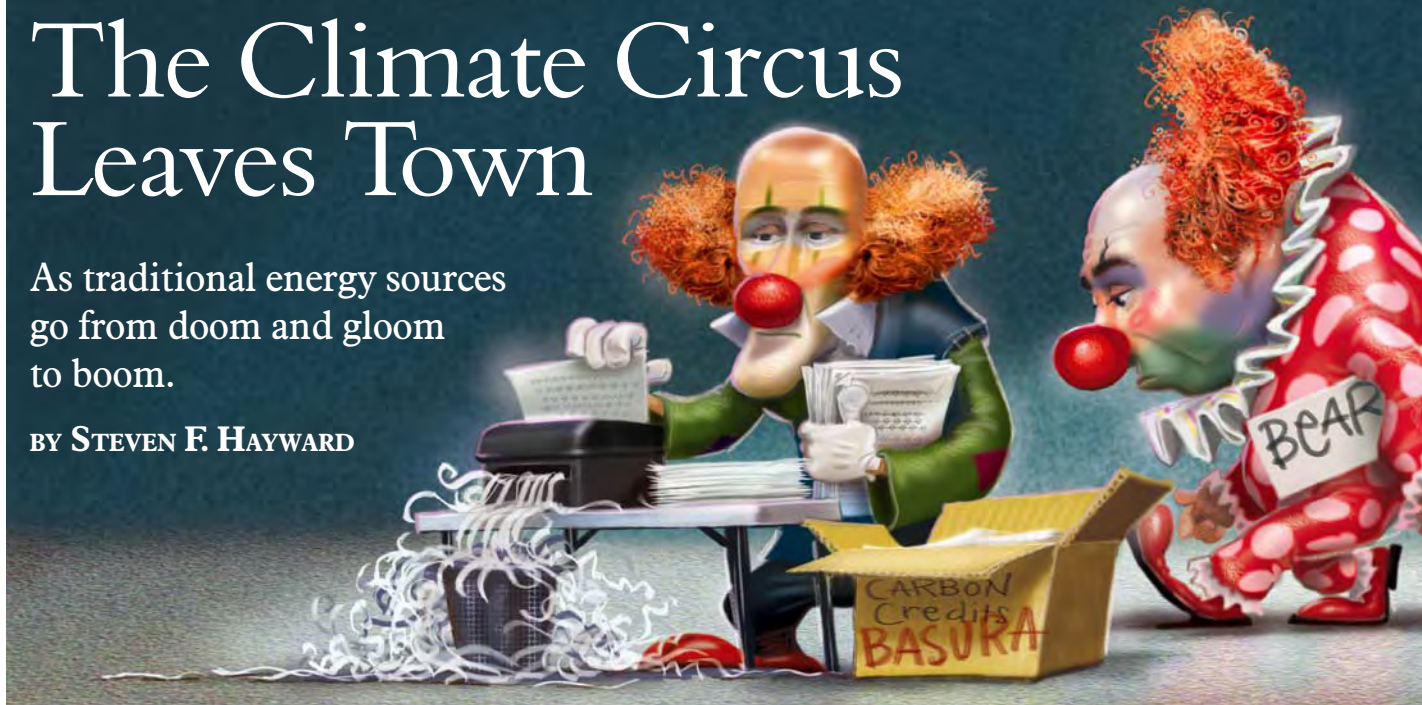


U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Comment at FreeEnterprise.com.

The Climate Circus Leaves Town

As traditional energy sources go from doom and gloom to boom.

BY STEVEN F. HAYWARD



If you had told environmentalists on Election Day 2008 that four years later there'd be no successor treaty to the Kyoto Protocol, that a Democratic Congress would not have enacted any meaningful climate legislation, that domestic oil production would be soaring even after a catastrophic offshore oil spill, and that the environmental community would be having a lively internal debate about whether it should support reviving nuclear power, most might have marched into the ocean to drown themselves. Yet that's the state of play four months into President Obama's second term.

Start with climate change. Early in March, the hacker or leaker of the two email caches from the Climate Research Unit at the University of East Anglia that rocked the climate science world in 2009 and again in 2011 released the remaining batch of material. The news produced barely a shrug even among climate skeptics, partly because the file contains 220,000 emails and documents (as opposed to about

1,000 in round one, and 5,000 in round two), making it impossible to review comprehensively. But it also appears unnecessary, as the climate change story has been overtaken by facts on the ground. Most significant: The pause in global warming—now going on 15 years—has become so obvious that many of the leading climate scientists are grudgingly admitting that global warming has stopped. James Hansen, who recently stepped down as NASA's chief climate scientist to become a full-time private sector alarmist, is among those admitting that the recent temperature record has flatlined.

After two decades of steady and substantial global temperature increase from 1980 to 1998, the pause in warming is causing a crisis for the climate crusade. It wasn't supposed to happen like this. The recent temperature record is falling distinctly to the very low end of the range predicted by the climate models and may soon fall out of it, which means the models are wrong, or, at the very least, something is going on that supposedly "settled" science hasn't been able to settle. Equally problematic for the theory, one place where the warmth might be hiding—the oceans—is not cooperating with the story line. Recent data

show that ocean warming has noticeably slowed, too.

These inconvenient data are causing the climate science community to reconsider the issue of climate sensitivity—that is, how much warming greenhouse gases actually cause—as I predicted would happen in these pages three years ago: "Eventually the climate modeling community is going to have to reconsider the central question: Have the models the IPCC [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] uses for its predictions of catastrophic warming overestimated the climate's sensitivity to greenhouse gases?"

A steady stream of scientific studies (often government-funded) published in peer-reviewed scientific journals that conclude climate sensitivity is overestimated were ignored by the media, with the notable exception of *New York Times* science blogger Andrew Revkin. But the media blackout was broken in dramatic fashion by the *Economist* in its March 30 edition, with a long feature about the growing doubts over the catastrophic warming projections that have been the lifeblood of the climate campaign. The *Economist* reviewed a number of new findings that conclude the likely range of future warming will be much more modest

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GARY LOCKE



—and manageable—than the Al Gores of the world have been claiming.

That the *Economist* would break with the pack is significant because the august British newsweekly had been among the most prominent media voices beating the drum for climate catastrophe and radical action to suppress hydrocarbon energy. Now it offers this zinger: “If climate scientists were credit-rating agencies, climate sensitivity would be on negative watch.” A Reuters story last week notes that scientists are “struggling” to explain the pause in warming. Expect other media to follow—if they continue to give the issue much coverage at all. The *New York Times* shut down its environment news desk in January and discontinued its Green Blog in March, concessions to the fact that readers are thoroughly bored with the issue. Recent opinion surveys find that public concern about climate change is at 20-year lows, not just in the United States but almost everywhere.

But it may not have mattered whether these troubles came to the climate campaign. Even if the full-monty doom and gloom case still looked persuasive, the massive and unexpected resurgence of hydrocarbon energy over the last few years has made the

green dream of hydrocarbon energy suppression more implausible than ever, chiefly because the “renewable” alternatives are still so much more expensive, inferior in performance, and inadequate to our energy needs. The boom in natural gas production is being accompanied by an equally substantial boom in domestic oil production for the same reason—advances in directional drilling technology and hydraulic fracturing.

Domestic oil production has reversed its long slow decline—heretofore thought irreversible by every public and private forecast—and is at its highest level in more than 20 years. The International Energy Agency forecasts that the United States is on its way to becoming the world’s top oil producer, without, it is worth noting, opening up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge or large new areas of offshore reserves that have been the center of contention for the last 30 years. Barack Obama has done what any clever politician would do: claim credit for the boom, even though most of the new activity has occurred on private and state land. Obama’s regulators are still slow-walking permit applications for drilling on federal land. It has to be awfully discouraging

for environmentalists to have won most of those access fights but still find U.S. oil production soaring.

The consequences for the U.S. energy picture are staggering. Oil imports have fallen by one-third over the last five years; the sour economy accounts for less than half of this decline. The United States is within striking distance of doing without Middle Eastern oil if it wishes. Although Europe and Asia have lagged the United States in deploying new technology to unlock oil and gas, they are catching up quickly. The “peak oil” hypothesis looks more and more like the population bomb, imminent resource exhaustion, and other busted Malthusian forecasts of the 1970s.

Meanwhile, renewable energy—wind, solar, and biofuels—is sputtering everywhere, as one would expect of any product wholly dependent on subsidies in a time of budgetary constraints. Tax credits and subsidies for wind and solar power survived the fiscal cliff deal on January 1, the result of some fancy footwork by renewable lobbyists months before, but aren’t likely to survive much longer. In Europe, subsidies for renewable energy are being cut just about everywhere. Britain, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, the Czech Republic,

Romania, Bulgaria, and Poland have all announced cuts in renewable energy subsidies; South Africa, India, and China, too. At the same time, Europe's carbon emissions trading scheme—the cornerstone of its climate policy—is near collapse. On April 16, the European parliament narrowly voted down a last-minute attempt to rescue the sagging carbon-trading system. Most investment banks that jumped on the carbon-trading bandwagon have closed their carbon desks. It may yet survive, but it has almost no enthusiastic support. On top of everything else, coal use in Europe is actually on the rise, some of it imported from the United States.

Despite these relentless setbacks for the climate campaign, environmentalists are not going gentle into this well-lit night, nor will they abandon their decades-old crusade to kill off hydrocarbon energy. The movement is too well funded, and has established ample footholds in the policy machinery stretching down to the local level in the United States. Having a “climate action policy” is *de rigueur* for just about every self-respecting city council and county commission in the country, typically raising numerous regulatory hurdles for new development. Moreover, the fallback position for the climateers—Environmental Protection Agency regulation under the Clean Air Act—is just getting into high gear, though “high gear” for the EPA is an excruciatingly slow process.

And that process just got a bit slower. Last year the EPA announced a draft of “new performance standards” for power plant greenhouse gas emissions that would have the practical effect of making it impossible to build new coal-fired power plants, except with unproven and uneconomical carbon sequestration technology. Only natural gas plants could meet the new standard. The EPA was supposed to finalize the rule a week ago, but withdrew it at the last minute, probably because the proposed rule was unlikely to survive a legal challenge. The EPA has solid legal ground to develop greenhouse gas regulations (unfortunately), but an arbitrary anti-coal rule

might have been tossed out in court just about the time a new president arrives in town four years from now—perhaps a Republican who would scupper the whole thing. The EPA has not announced a timetable for a revised rule, but the new EPA administrator-designate, the true-believing Gina McCarthy, will no doubt push hard for aggressive regulations. The EPA is already talking about tough new performance standards for existing coal plants over the next 18 months.

The most high profile energy controversy remains the Keystone XL pipeline. Obama punted on a decision before the election, and now that the State Department's latest environmental review gave the project a thumbs up, he's in a difficult political spot. If he okays the pipeline, his vocal environmental supporters, such as Tom Steyer, the anti-Keystone San Francisco billionaire who hosted a fundraiser for the president two weeks ago, will go berserk. But the business community, organized labor, a solid Senate majority, and, according to polls, a solid majority of the public, favor Keystone. The Canadian government, after observing a cautious stance of staying out of domestic American politics, has started making unusual public noises that a denial of Keystone will strain relations. Obama can't vote “present” on Keystone forever.

What he may do is tentatively approve Keystone along with a major policy shift that will please environmentalists and subject Keystone to further and perhaps fatal delays. There is talk that the administration may expand the scope of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to require that proposed projects like Keystone document their impact on global warming in the permit approval process. It would be a bonanza for environmental lawyers, who would have new grounds for filing lawsuits to challenge the adequacy of environmental impact statements. Activists have implicated global warming in everything from AIDS to zoonotic diseases (see The Warmlist, www.numberwatch.co.uk/warmlist.htm, for a complete dossier), so environmental impact statements

could become multivolume affairs with endless court challenges and costly “mitigation” steps required for permits.

While this might thrill environmentalists, it risks a major backlash. The problem with environmental statutes such as NEPA, the Clean Air Act, and the Clean Water Act is that taken literally they could prohibit almost all human activity. Environmental regulation has always been subject to realistic political constraints, though regulators strain at the leash to see how much they can get away with. This slow, insidious process tends to go on regardless of which party occupies the White House. But an overreach by Obama could finally prompt Congress to consider revising the basic statutes that give regulators so much leeway. The landmark environmental statutes of the 1970s have been politically sacrosanct, but red state Democrats would surely not be fond of a dramatic expansion of environmental regulation.

The final unexpected aspect of the global hydrocarbon renaissance is that it is starting to cause a few environmentalists to have second thoughts about . . . nuclear power. For nearly 30 years nuclear power was the only form of energy environmentalists despised more than hydrocarbons. But even with Japan's nuclear power plant disaster of 2011, some environmentalists have come to see a positive tradeoff of nuclear power over coal and natural gas. James Hansen recently coauthored a paper concluding that nuclear power has saved 1.8 million lives over coal and gas-fired alternative electricity sources since 1970, and will prevent 7 million deaths by midcentury if it supplants a significant portion of fossil fuel electricity. In June a new documentary film, *Pandora's Promise*, will feature prominent environmentalists, such as Stewart Brand, who have changed their mind on nuclear power. The film was screened to good reviews at the most recent Sundance Film Festival; apparently the resolutely anti-nuke host, Robert Redford, hadn't noticed it on the program. But there's a lot the old fossils of environmentalism don't notice these days, starting with the dead-end road they've hit. ♦

Out of Balance

Obama's deceptive budget.

BY JAY COST

Earlier this month, President Obama released his fiscal year 2014 budget, which calls for \$1.1 trillion in higher taxes over the next decade, cuts of \$400 billion from Medicare and Medicaid, and alterations to Social Security's benefit rate worth about \$130 billion.

Initial reviews seemed heartening. Republican senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina said this could be a step toward a grand bargain: "The president is showing a little bit of leg here, this is somewhat encouraging." The left wing of the Democratic party, meanwhile, reacted negatively. Arizona Democrat Raúl Grijalva, co-chair of the House Progressive Caucus, called the budget a "nonstarter." That seemed another promising sign. If the far left of the Democratic party is opposed, how bad can Obama's offer actually be?

Unfortunately, on closer inspection, the answer turns out to be: very bad indeed.

For starters, conservatives should pay no attention to the criticisms from left-wing Democrats, which may merely demonstrate how reactionary the American left has become. Progressives are so enamored of their past political successes in health policy that they refuse any attempts to update entitlement programs for modern times. Medicare may be inefficient and ineffective; it may have been designed at a time when the economy was growing, the workforce was growing, and people died far younger than today; it may crowd out spending on other worthy policy goals; it may be a bonanza for lobbying groups; but it is theirs, and it shall not be touched.

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Unfortunately, the issue of the federal budget deficit, especially over the long term, is poorly understood, even by many journalists and politicians. One reason is that the country actually has two deficit problems. The first is a short-term imbalance between



Exactly the wrong message

revenues and outlays, due in no small part to the recession of 2008-09, which greatly reduced tax collections while expanding federal spending, especially for programs on automatic pilot, such as food stamps. In theory, this imbalance should end after the economy returns to its full potential.

The second deficit problem can be summed up in two words: health care. Federal health entitlement spending is growing faster than the economy. This year, the government will spend approximately 5 percent of the nation's gross domestic product on programs like Medicare, Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and Obamacare. The Congressional Budget Office projects that in 25 years, that figure will exceed 10 percent of GDP. In 50 years it will exceed 15 percent of GDP. Meanwhile,

discretionary spending is not contributing to our long-term deficit, as it is expected to drop from 11 percent of GDP this year to a shade under 10 percent in 2038.

Health entitlements are devouring our budget, but Obama does not address this long-term problem. In fact, his "balanced" approach is anything but. Tax revenues cannot be expected to grow much faster than the economy, but health entitlement spending will do precisely that; thus, taxing our way out of this long-term deficit would require gargantuan and ever-increasing tax rates, which would themselves take a terrible toll on economic growth.

Unfortunately, that does not mean the entitlement problem has a simple fix in the form of deeper cuts. The experiences of the 1990s are instructive. When President Bill Clinton and congressional Republicans produced a briefly balanced budget in the late 1990s, they achieved it partly by agreeing on cuts to Medicare reimbursement rates for doctors according to a formula known as the "sustainable growth rate" (SGR). But the SGR was unrealistic. Doctors rebelled, and Congress ever since has been forced to spend billions upon billions on what is known as the "doc fix," which returns to Medicare the money theoretically taken out in the 1997 budget deal.

The lesson here is that cuts to entitlement programs are extremely fragile politically. Doctors, hospitals, nurses, senior citizens, and a host of other interest groups are bound to rebel and put enormous pressure on Washington to restore lost funds. Obamacare pretends to cut a little more than \$700 billion from Medicare over the next decade, but Richard Foster, the former chief actuary of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, has expressed doubt that the cuts will ever be carried out.

Why, then, should Republicans agree to anything that resembles Obama's budget? His tax hikes cannot cover the fast-growing cost of health entitlements, and his cuts to Medicare providers will be

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impossible to sustain. Indeed, the president himself gives the game away by back-loading most of his Medicare cuts in the years after he leaves office.

From this perspective, the whole concept of “balance” appears to be little more than a poll-tested phrase designed to take advantage of widespread ignorance of our problem. Average people who know little about why Uncle Sam’s books are out of whack react positively when pollsters introduce the idea of “balance”—and President Obama proceeds to claim the middle ground, even though his proposals leave our big problem unaddressed.

In reality, our long-term debt crisis is as straightforward as it is scary. America has two options: first, retain health entitlements with little change and adopt a regime of ever-rising taxes, fundamentally altering the political economy of the last 60 years; or, second, reform health entitlements so that current tax levels can be sustained and deficits controlled. Mere cuts in Medicare reimbursement rates don’t work. Real reform would alter the economic and political incentives in Medicare to drive down costs without sacrificing quality of care.

Republicans urge the second path. The Ryan plan would transform Medicare from a fee-for-service system into a modern premium-support program. Barack Obama and the Democratic party have countered with nothing of substance. The president’s FY 2014 budget does not offer reform, nor does it call for the substantially higher taxes needed to pay for the programs as they are. Instead, it tries to mask the problem.

This might be politically “balanced,” but as policy it is the height of irresponsibility, and conservatives can surely say so more forcefully. The only way the long-term budget dilemma will ever be solved is for the American people to recognize the scope of the problem and give their representatives the political space to do what is necessary to secure the country’s future. ♦

Strategic Gas

The foreign policy case for U.S. energy exports.

BY GARY SCHMITT

The liquid natural gas facility at Cove Point, Maryland—a seven-tank complex on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay—has borne witness to the up and downs, the good times and the bad, of the American natural gas market. Built in the 1970s to handle liquid natural gas (LNG) imports from abroad, the plant was mothballed within two years as deregulation of the domestic gas market boosted supplies and lowered gas prices at home.

That’s where things stood for much of the next 20 years. Supplies of natural gas more than kept up with demand, and gas prices in the 1990s bounced around between \$1.60 and \$2.30 per million British thermal units (Btu).

But at the turn of the century, as ready supplies of natural gas peaked and demand grew, natural gas prices climbed appreciably higher, reaching \$10 per million Btu over the winter of 2000–2001, and spiking to well over \$14 in 2005 in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Reflecting the conventional wisdom of the day, Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan testified before the Senate’s Energy Committee in the summer of 2003 that “tight natural gas markets have been a long time in coming, and distant futures prices suggest that we are not apt to return to earlier periods of relative abundance and low prices anytime soon.” Around the same time, a new

energy company bought the Cove Point plant and spent over a billion dollars to upgrade the facility in the expectation that LNG imports would start flowing from abroad to address the supply shortage in the United States.

Today, the plant stands largely idle once again. As a result of the revolution in tapping into unconventional natural gas reserves through “hydrofracking,” the United States is now afloat on a sea of natural gas. Last year, American gas production reached

a record high of nearly 30 trillion cubic feet, with U.S. natural gas prices dropping to around a quarter of what they were just four years ago. The International Energy Agency estimates that the United States will shortly pass Russia

as the world’s largest producer of natural gas. If there is a problem now, it’s a gas glut, with low prices threatening to make it uneconomical to bring new supplies to market.

The logical solution is to export natural gas in the form of LNG to countries whose domestic resources are short or nonexistent and who are paying premium prices for new, dependable supplies. Or at least one would think so.

But even though study after study—including one sponsored by the Department of Energy and released after November’s election—has concluded that exporting natural gas would help reduce the trade deficit and create jobs at home without appreciably raising prices domestically or undermining the competitive edge in manufacturing the United States gains



The Cove Point terminal

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by having cheaper energy, the Obama administration has been sitting on more than 20 applications and, to date, has approved only one new export site at Sabine Pass in Louisiana.

Fearing apparently the blowback both from environmentalists (who have been on a green jihad against fracking for the past several years) and members of Congress (who want to keep the cost of heating fuel and power as low as possible for their constituents), the White House has slow-walked initiatives to export LNG. And of course the administration is also worried that the success of the revolution in natural gas production will undermine the Obama agenda of propping up solar and wind energy.

What's all the more remarkable about the administration's position is the degree to which it ignores the strategic benefits that would accrue to the United States if it became a reliable supplier of energy to allies and partner states.

Note, for example, that in 2011 more than half of the globe's LNG exports went to frontline Asian allies and security partners: South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan. Each country is importing more natural gas and, at the same time, attempting to diversify its supply chain to enhance its energy security. The United States ought to be a player in addressing their need for secure supplies of more gas.

Japan's natural gas needs have skyrocketed since the Fukushima nuclear crisis and its shutting down of the island's nuclear power plants. And as demand has increased, so has the price Japan pays, reaching over \$17 per million cubic feet versus \$2.60 in the United States. Japan is interested in acquiring supplies not only at a lower price but also from a dependable supplier. An obvious source is Alaska, whose North Slope fields hold enough conventional natural gas to feed Japan's utilities for eight to nine decades at current rates of consumption. The spread between what it would cost to get Alaska's gas on line, liquefied, and shipped, and the current prices being paid by Japan is such that Tokyo would garner significant savings, while Alaska would once again strike it rich.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe made it clear when he visited Washington in February that he was hoping the administration would lean forward in providing Japan with a stable supply of natural gas. What he got from the administration was "we're still looking into it." Rather than go against the environmentalist wing of his party, President Obama would evidently forsake the obvious advantages to America of a Japan that doesn't have to worry about taking policy positions that would be helpful to the United States but might anger a gas supplier such as Russia or, someday, Iran.

Although not a formal ally, India too has made clear its interest in obtaining LNG from the United States. Some analysts expect India's gas demands to grow at 5.4 percent annually over the next several decades, and it is looking to meet that demand with foreign supplies, including possibly by pipeline from Iran. Far better to have New Delhi buying at least some of its energy from the United States. If the administration thought seriously about natural gas exports, it would make exports a key component in its "pivot" to Asia.

And LNG exports to Europe have strategic importance. Indeed, precisely because gas once destined for the United States is now having to find other buyers, the positive impact is already being felt in Europe. This extra gas is helping Europe in its efforts to move away from heavy dependence on Russia's Gazprom and, in some cases, has forced the once-monopolizing Gazprom to renegotiate its prices to be more in line with market forces.

Moscow isn't oblivious to this threat. With almost half the state's budget coming from oil and gas revenues, Putin can ill afford to see Gazprom lose its preferred position supplying Europe's gas. Not surprisingly, Russian "businessmen" have been busy trying to frustrate alternative pipelines from the Caucasus, offering sweetheart deals for local energy companies to sweep them into the Gazprom system, spreading cash around as needed, and—most laughably, given Russia's own environmental sins—reportedly funding efforts within Europe to hype green

concerns associated with hydrofracking.

Moscow's sway during the Cold War was largely a product of its massive arsenal of men, tanks, and missiles, but today its influence is tied to what comes out of pipelines. While exporting LNG from the United States is not the only way, or even the main one, to wean Europe off Russian gas, it can be an important step in that direction.

There is also much to be said about the relative security of U.S. energy supplies as opposed to gas exports to Europe from Nigeria, North Africa, and Qatar. Political stability is hardly the calling card of the first two, while Qatar—which now controls roughly one-third of the world's natural gas export market—resides in a nasty neighborhood. LNG from Qatar is vulnerable to the Strait of Hormuz closing or a conflict in the Gulf. And its massive LNG facilities are well within the reach of Iranian missiles.

There is no shortage of advantageous geopolitical reasons for moving forward with LNG exports from the United States. But given the fact that every few months there seems to be a new find of shale gas in South America, Africa, the Mediterranean, and elsewhere, the laxity with which the administration is approaching this matter has real opportunity costs. Billions are required in upfront infrastructure investments to drill, liquefy, and ship. Companies are not sitting on their hands waiting for the Obama administration to get its act together when they can find other gas reserves to tap into just as readily. Once major investments are made elsewhere, one has to wonder if those same companies will have the same interest in pursuing projects here, if doing so lessens the potential profits from existing plays or creates too much LNG capacity for the existing market.

It doesn't help that, under U.S. law, there are multiple layers of state and federal regulatory bodies that can stop, or slow down, exploration or the construction of the infrastructure necessary for exporting. Nor is it helpful that, when it comes to determining the American strategic interest in

exporting gas, the final decision currently resides with the Department of Energy. Indeed, under the original governing statute, the Natural Gas Act of 1938, exports are only allowed if the DOE determines those exports would be in the “public interest”—with the only modification coming in 1992 when the Energy Policy Act stipulated that exports to countries with which Washington has a free-trade agreement would prima facie be considered in the public interest. This means that export requests to key allies, such as Japan and the United Kingdom, with no trade agreement on the books, face greater scrutiny.

Efforts have been made to change this system. Former senator Richard Lugar had proposed to put NATO allies on equal footing with free-trade states when it comes to LNG export licenses. More recently, Senators John Barrasso (R-Wyo.) and Mark Begich (D-Alaska) have sponsored a bill that would expand the NATO exception to Japan and, no less important, would require DOE to approve exports if the State Department, in conjunction with the Defense Department, determines that they would “promote the national security interests of the United States.” So far, the bill hasn’t made much headway in the Democrat-controlled Senate, but there is recognition at last that gas exports not only are an economic issue but also have potentially significant strategic implications.

For now, the Energy Department, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and the Environmental Protection Agency will continue to rule the roost when it comes to gas exports—with no doubt a hidden hand from the White House. Meanwhile, the owners of Cove Point—in yet another twist in the plant’s history—have recently submitted a 12,000-page application to the government to reconfigure the plant’s terminal from an import facility to an export facility. Approval of their application will depend on whether the energy secretary agrees that the planned LNG exports to Japan and India are in the “public interest”—no matter the undeniable and obvious fact that they are. ♦

Farmers with Benefits

The perpetual subsidy machine.

BY ELI LEHRER

American farmers did well in 2012, to say the least. They benefited from record-high commodity prices, burgeoning organic produce markets, and high sale prices for farmland. As they have for two decades, farm families took home more annual income—about \$20,000 more on average—than non-farm families. And they could count

same: Most conversation in Congress revolves around how much federal largess to farmers should grow, and hardly anybody questions whether or not the subsidies ought to continue.

The coming debate over a major farm bill, and the programs intended to benefit farmers in particular, matters not just for the financial stakes—although they’re significant. It’s also a test of the Republican party’s mettle when it comes to dealing with the size, scope, and negative consequences of federal activity. If the GOP and, for that matter, Democrats honestly concerned about good governance cannot hold the line against ever-growing subsidies to farmers in the bill, they cannot claim much credibility to reform other parts of the federal edifice. Quite simply, the current farm bill, now approaching its first round of major committee discussions, ought to



And you should see us milk the system.

on many friends in Congress: While facing a “fiscal cliff,” the uncertain sustainability of entitlement programs, and the near certainty of tax increases, members of both parties came together around bills that would have spent at least \$950 billion on agricultural subsidies over the next 10 years—an increase of more than \$300 billion from the most recent (2008) farm bill.

While gridlock and the press of other issues resulted in Congress deciding to kick the can until September of this year, the fundamental contours of the debate remain the

be a crucible for anybody concerned about the country’s finances.

That said, support for farm programs runs deep. For roughly five decades, farm subsidy programs have expanded as a result of a deeply corrupt log-rolling agreement that folds subsidies to farmers into a massive bill with food and nutrition programs for the poor. As a result, urban, mostly Democratic members of Congress have supported significant subsidies for farmers in return for rural, generally Republican members’ support of programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), better known by its former name of food stamps.

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As an exercise in client politics, there's no doubt this bargain has "worked": Not only do both types of programs garner votes for their supporters, but SNAP and more than a dozen other federal nutrition programs create a larger market for the products that farmers grow. In raw dollar terms, it's pretty clear that the nutrition programs and their liberal supporters get the better deal: The current farm bills devote more than 75 cents of every dollar in the bill to them. (Of course, the nutrition programs also have far more direct beneficiaries.)

Nutrition programs are costly, prone to fraud, and in need of serious management improvements. That said, there's little doubt that their fundamental purpose of feeding people, particularly children, who would otherwise go hungry has widespread support. While there's plenty of merit in reforming them in ways that save money—the House Republican-passed budget which block-grants the program to states offers one potential model—getting rid of them altogether appears impossible and arguably inhumane.

The direct farm support programs can't claim anything like such a public purpose. Although they're significantly smaller, somewhere around \$300 billion over the 10-year period of the farm bill, farmer support programs have outlived their usefulness. The dairy price supports program (governed under a 1949 law based on policies first adopted in the 1920s) serves as a case in point. In the early 20th century, the program may have had a purpose: Practical refrigerated trucks didn't exist, and as a result, milk couldn't be sold more than about 70 miles from the dairy that produced it. Policymakers had reason to think that cities might have a hard time sustaining supplies of fresh milk. Thus, they dreamed up a Rube Goldberg series of equations to assure a commercially viable price for milk in every market—variables have included things like a city's distance from the dairy center Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

A few refrigerated trucks were already on the market by 1949,

however, and, just a few years after the bill passed, technological problems with transporting milk long distances had been solved. But the system remains in place and makes all dairy products more expensive. Other programs send U.S. tax money to Brazil in a blatant payoff to prevent the South American giant from bringing World Trade Organization complaints against the United States for our own even larger sugar subsidy and import restriction program.

But the dairy and sugar programs are only one small corner of the universe of absurdity that characterizes the nation's farm payments system. Take, for example, the second-largest agricultural subsidy program overall, something called "Direct Payments." Originally passed in 1996 in what now can be counted as one of the last true small-government achievements of the reformist Republicans who led the class of 1994 in the House, the program was intended to wean most farmers off of subsidies. At the time it passed, Congress promised that the payments would decline each year and vanish entirely by 2002. Because of its status as a transitional program, however, it had fewer requirements than any program before or since: Subsidies flowed based on historical growing patterns, and farmers didn't have to plant *anything* to receive federal money, and it continues to the present day. Although its downright absurdity has led to a broad consensus to eliminate it—even most farm groups say they are happy to see it end—that doesn't stop farmers from trying to get their hands in the public till in other ways.

Right now, the biggest subsidy, scheduled to cost about \$90 billion over the next 10 years, flows to a federal crop insurance program. The program requires private insurers to service policies and take on some risk, but federal agencies set the prices, pay a large share of the premiums on farmers' behalf, and "backstop" the private insurers when losses exceed certain thresholds. Unlike most other

insurance, crop insurance protects not only against accidental losses, which would be unexceptional, but also against fluctuations in commodity prices. This, despite the fact that there is a robust private solution to the risk posed to farmers by such fluctuations, namely the trading of futures contracts for agricultural commodities.

Indeed, most of the payments made under the program come from these protections against price fluctuations. Farm groups and bipartisan majorities of every committee that has voted on farm policy in the last two years have supported a cynically designed replacement for direct payments called "shallow loss," which won't charge any premiums and isn't included in the insurance sections of the bill. Unlike the current crop insurance programs—which typically leave farmers themselves or entirely private insurers responsible for roughly 40 percent of a loss—it will cover as much as 90 percent of all losses. Since the proposed formulas will pay farmers for "losses" based on declines from current, historically high prices, this amounts to a virtual profit guarantee for those who grow food and fiber.

Even worse, these programs promise to do real damage to the environment. Since the Reagan administration, just about everybody receiving subsidies has had to follow a few simple rules. In particular, those who plant highly erodible land with federal subsidies need to develop plans to avoid soil erosion, and such subsidies can't be used to drain wetlands that serve as wildlife habitat, storm buffers, and natural water filtration. (Farmers can still do these things with their own money, but taxpayers won't pay for it or provide them with disaster relief.) As a result of the end of direct payments and subsequent expansion of crop insurance subsidies, however, there's a real chance that these accountability mechanisms might be lessened or even eliminated.

The result could be real environmental damage: major loss of wetlands and outright destruction of good farmland as a direct result of government policies—damage that would never

happen under a free market system. Because of the subsidies and profit guarantees, farmers will have every reason to plant marginal land that would be far better left in something close to its natural state. Indeed, to date, much of the best and most thoughtful opposition to agricultural subsidies has come from decidedly green groups like the National Wildlife Federation, the Environmental Working Group, and Friends of the Earth. These groups are hardly hotbeds of free market ideology, but they have just as much dislike for agricultural subsidies as any group on the right.

Whatever function they once served, America's producer-side farm subsidies no longer have any valid public purpose. The much-romanticized family farm is, for all intents and purposes, dead: The number of farms producing enough income to support a family (more than \$100,000 in gross revenues) has declined every year since World War II. As of 2012, only about 400,000 commercially viable farms—less than three-tenths of 1 percent of all households—exist in the United States. The great bulk of subsidies flow—directly or indirectly—to wealthy people and agribusiness. The Environmental Working Group found that 26 businesses got over \$1 million each in crop insurance premium subsidies during 2011 alone. Furthermore, many of the most promising sectors of the agricultural economy—boutique organic farms and wineries—are also those that receive the least support from the government.

Eliminating all farmer-side subsidies immediately may not be a realistic course of action. As the 1996 effort to phase them out has shown, even an agreement to do so may fall by the wayside. But America's agricultural subsidies and price controls have well outlived any usefulness they may once have had. If they want to show they are serious about fiscal responsibilities, conservatives and liberals in Congress should get together and work to minimize the pointless largess that taxpayers now distribute to the nation's farmers. ♦

Is Traditional Marriage Toast?

Very possibly.

BY IVAN KENNEALLY



From this day forward, for better, for worse?

Every discussion of gay marriage should begin with a recognition of its historical radicalness, its exceptionality. Heterosexual marriage has been the fundamental unit of human sociability for thousands of years, a common thread running through otherwise disjunctive cultures and wide-ranging ethnic diversity. Wherever one lands on the issue of same-sex marriage, there can be no gainsaying its extraordinariness.

It's also clear that same-sex marriage is a culmination of a long-brewing development, an unspooling of essential modern premises. The relentless logic of modernity is unrestrained individuality, the lonesome sovereignty of the singular person. The pith of matrimony is natural gregariousness, our completion as

human beings through coupling. It was only a matter of time before the crashing tide of autonomy reached the shores of conjugal union, pitting the inviolability of the individual against the venerableness of the family. If anything, it is remarkable marriage has remained intact for so long, a testament to its profound allure even in a culture whose trends undermine it.

Traditionally, marriage wasn't conceived as a conjoining of two individuals, but rather of two families. It was neither an expression of individuality nor even a constraint upon it: Individuality was too abstract and deracinated a notion to demand chastening. In this way, marriage stands as a vestige of the premodern universe, a time when social dependence was accepted as the central feature of communal life.

If individuality is now our central political category, consent is our

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chief moral one. But historically, consent was not understood as the crux of marriage. If anything, marriage was interpreted as a limitation on consent since the bonds of marriage could not be consensually dissolved. And since marriages were arranged by heads of families, to the extent that marriage was an expression of consent at all, it was the consent of families and not individuals.

This historical context complicates the dispute for both sides. First, it's not clear why gay activists are all that interested in marriage as traditionally understood. They often declaim against the tyranny of bourgeois morality and the arbitrariness of the sexual tethers it imposes. Why do they want access to an institution they consider a tired exhibition of antiquated prejudice?

The typical answer is they want that access in the interests of equality. This itself is not an uncomplicated demand; the insistence on equal rights presupposes equal conditions, or in other words that gay marriage is, in all relevant aspects, the same as traditional marriage. But do even the defenders of gay marriage believe this? Do they accept the centrality of monogamy to marriage? Do they understand the connubial relationship as sanctified by God, forever infrangible, *sub specie aeternitatis*?

And why does the gay community pine for governmental benediction of their relationships? Shouldn't they be against official or authoritative privileging of any union over another? The apparently irrepressible rationale of consent should legitimate any arrangement irrespective not only of gender but also number, purpose, and the like.

Why even assign special status to those who are serious? Isn't the inclination, on both sides, to exalt gravity a dogmatic discrimination? Presumably, two (or seven) persons could freely consent to wed light-heartedly. After all, this is the gravamen of Justice Anthony Kennedy's opinion in *Lawrence v. Texas*: that the government has no right to ordain one autonomous relationship superior to another.

On the face of it, the argument for gay marriage almost seems conservative, in the sense that gays are seeking to participate in a conservative sacrament. But the thrust of gay marriage, powered by the exaltation of individuality and consent, leads to more libertarian conclusions, such as getting the government effectively out of the marriage business entirely. It could even point to an end to marriage itself, or to any conceptual corset that limits or certifies our irreducibly individual choices, that dares approve or regulate our social and libidinal impulses.

Gay marriage does not mean, at its core, equal access to marriage. It means the redefinition of marriage, its transvaluation. It means expanding and swelling marriage until it bursts at the seams, leaving something unrecognizable. For marriage is not really the prize, nor is equality. Behind the activist rhetoric of equal rights one sees the march of modernity itself, carrying its influence to one of the last quarters that stubbornly resist it.

The problem for defenders of traditional marriage is that marriage as we find it today isn't that traditional. It has already been decisively transformed by the advancement of modernity's twin ideals, individuality and consent. Divorce has become easy. Contraception, not gay marriage, sundered the connection between marriage and childbearing. Almost no one, even the staunchest defender of traditional marriage, thinks of it primarily as the union of two families.

And herein lies the problem in disentangling the knotty dispute of how to define marriage. Both parties to the debate tend to accept the cardinal elements of modern thought, which undermine traditional marriage. Both sides, when they unfurl their positions to their furthest reaches, end up with the libertarian retirement of marriage as an institution. They are fighting over a treasure neither truly understands nor wants. Whoever wins in the short term, traditional marriage may well be doomed.

The best hope for traditional marriage is that the current contest ignites searching reflection on its meaning and value as well as its tenuous residence in the house of modernity. In many respects, the United States has fared far better than Europe in at least forestalling what increasingly presents itself as inevitable. This provides some promise that within the American mind there resides the will thoughtfully to reconsider, and therefore to withstand, the otherwise thoughtless rejection of whatever wisdom our cultural inheritance contains. ♦

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Barbarism in Philadelphia

The crimes of Kermit Gosnell

BY JON A. SHIELDS

Prosecutors are seeking the death penalty for abortionist Kermit Gosnell, who is on trial in Philadelphia for doping one patient to death and killing seven fetuses born alive. He doubtless seems a worthy candidate for death row. Dr. Gosnell, after all, is a monster. Yet his barbarity never required him to venture much beyond the expansive abortion rights created by *Roe v. Wade* and its companion 1973 Supreme Court decision, *Doe v. Bolton*. Dr. Gosnell, indeed, could argue that he had a constitutional right to slaughter his very young victims. If instead we insist Kermit Gosnell should die, then perhaps we must reexamine *Roe* and *Doe*.

Dr. Gosnell was a merciless killer, willing to perform abortions at any stage of pregnancy. He routinely induced labor in women more than six months pregnant and then cut the spines of their breathing newborns. This was Gosnell's "standard procedure," according to the grand jury report. "These killings became so routine," in fact, "that no one could put an exact number on them."

One corpse found at his clinic, named Baby A, was so large that Gosnell joked he could "walk me to the bus stop." Baby A weighed 6 pounds. After Gosnell snipped Baby A's spine, he crammed the 19-inch corpse into a shoebox, though arms and legs spilled out. Gosnell deposited another child, Baby C, on a countertop while he attended to the newborn's mother. There it lay, breathing and moving its arms, for some 20 minutes. Gosnell's assistant then "slit its neck," just like all the others.

Yet the grand jury found that the "hundreds" of abortions like those of Babies A and C that Gosnell performed over his long career "were not even the worst cases."

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Gosnell and his wife performed the very late abortions on Sundays, when no other staff were present to see them. Gosnell destroyed those case files at his home, leaving no record. "We may never know the details of these cases," concluded the grand jury.

When law enforcement officers raided Gosnell's office on suspicion of drug dealing, they found some 45 fetal bodies. They were stuffed in "bags, milk jugs, orange juice cartons, and even in cat-food containers." Some were frozen in an office refrigerator. Gosnell also kept "rows of jars" containing severed baby feet.

Such behavior suggests that Gosnell delighted in his violent deeds. One witness recalled a baby that writhed in pain from the pressure of surgical scissors around its neck. Gosnell joked, "That's what you call a chicken with its head cut off." At his trial, Gosnell listened with calm bemusement as prosecutors and witnesses told of his devilry. One journalist reported, "He just calmly

watched and occasionally took notes with a vague hint of a smile on his face from time to time."

Dr. Gosnell, in short, fits the profile of a sociopathic killer. But unlike most such deviants, Gosnell could argue that he acted within his constitutional rights.

Under *Roe* and *Doe*, doctors possess a constitutional right to perform abortions during the third trimester of pregnancy. While *Roe* allows states to ban third-trimester abortions, *Doe* says that any such ban must allow exceptions for the health of the mother, and assessments of maternal health must include "all factors—physical, emotional, psychological, familial, and the woman's age—relevant to the well-being of the patient." In other

One might reasonably ask if a person deserves the death penalty for an act that is legal in nearly half the states, an act that isn't frowned upon by public figures from the president of the United States to the representatives of esteemed interest groups.

words, abortion remains a right in the third trimester for any reason that is relevant to a patient's well-being.

Who gets to assess the well-being of the mother under *Doe*? The doctor. The Court in *Doe* concluded that the necessity of any late-term abortion is a “professional judgment” that the “physician will be called upon to make routinely.” As the pro-choice Guttmacher Institute explains, “only the physician, in the course of evaluating the specific circumstances of an individual case, can define what constitutes ‘health.’”

Thus, states cannot overrule a physician's evaluation with any independent assessment. States cannot even articulate broad criteria by which doctors should assess well-being. Only doctors can decide what *Doe* allows in practice. Under *Doe*, no one has a right to overrule the independent judgment of abortionists.

The grand jury seemed to think otherwise. It concluded, for example, that Gosnell performed “a flagrantly illegal abortion of a 29-week-old fetus.” It even claimed that aborting fetuses after 24-weeks' gestation is “a crime in itself.” As a matter of constitutional law, that seems false. Under *Roe* and *Doe*, abortionists can always kill fetuses up to the moment of birth for any reason they find compelling, so long as they can couch that reason in terms of the mother's well-being.

So what clear legal violation did Gosnell commit? Two relatively minor ones.

Pennsylvania is one of nine states that require a second physician to concur with the “professional judgment” of an abortionist who wants to perform a third-trimester abortion. Gosnell failed to seek second opinions. One has to wonder: Is that failure really a capital crime? Gosnell ignored a procedural requirement of Pennsylvania law. Had Gosnell performed the same late-term abortions across the river in Cherry Hill, New Jersey—or in 40 other states—he would not have committed even a procedural offense.



Gosnell, above, in 2010; below, his clinic

One might object, further, that Gosnell's real crime was not the practice of third-trimester abortion. Instead, Gosnell should have saved the lives of those fetuses that survived his attempts to abort them. Pennsylvania has a law protecting babies that survive abortions. And it is clearly the grand jury's view that Gosnell's acts were criminal. As the grand jury report emphasized in horror, Gosnell killed “live, viable, moving, breathing, crying babies.” Even so, sending Gosnell to his death on the basis of this argument would seem problematic under the current legal abortion regime, for at least three reasons.

First, it ignores the fact that there have been many such killings over the years. In the 1970s and '80s, it was not uncommon for newborns to survive saline abortions. These babies were badly burned by salt solutions and

often died untreated. What made Gosnell different was volume—he killed abortion survivors far more often than any known predecessor. But he might have reasonably concluded that the act itself of killing abortion survivors was not remotely akin to murder. It had been done before, even in state hospitals, without so much as a fine.

Second, the protection of babies who survive abortions remains a subject of controversy, not a matter of settled law or even morality. While 27 states including Pennsylvania have laws protecting such infants, another 23 states and the District of Columbia do not.

Indeed, a Planned Parenthood official recently testified in court that in cases of “botched abortion” the decision to kill the newborn should be left to the “patient and the health care provider.” Planned Parenthood representatives later reversed this position as a result of political fallout from the testimony, but their private view is clear. And many politicians share it. Barack Obama repeatedly refused to support a bill protecting abortion victims born alive when he was a state senator in Illinois.

So, one might reasonably ask if someone deserves the death penalty for an act that is legal in nearly half the states, an act that isn't frowned upon by public figures from the president of the United States to the representatives of esteemed interest groups. Gosnell apparently concluded that in the eyes of the abortion industry's

liberal advocates, killing survivors of abortion is at worst a moral gray area.

This message was conveyed quite powerfully in the state of Pennsylvania, despite its legal ban. According to the grand jury report, when pro-choice governor Tom Ridge came to power in 1993, his administration instructed state officials to cease clinic inspections since they “would be ‘putting a barrier up to women’ seeking abortions.” State inspections, which had been only sporadic before, stopped altogether. When Ridge’s policy was revisited at a meeting of “high-level government officials” in 1999, they decided to continue their hands-off approach to abortion clinic regulation. Like Governor Ridge, they didn’t want to restrict women’s reproductive freedom. As the grand jury concluded, the state Department of Health “has deliberately chosen not to enforce [state] laws.” Gosnell saw that the state did not fully believe in its own abortion restrictions, including the prohibition on killing infants born alive. Now the state seeks Gosnell’s death for violating those same laws.

Third, the liberal position on killing abortion survivors makes a bizarre kind of moral sense. After all, what is the moral difference between killing an 8-month-old human being in the womb and killing it in the bright light of an operating room? And if there is a difference, can it bear the moral weight of the death penalty? If Gosnell is executed for his abortion practices, it would seem to be because he didn’t pump enough lethal digoxin into the hearts of his victims before they were born.

In fact, Gosnell did sometimes try to inject digoxin into the hearts of fetuses, as is standard practice in third-trimester abortions. But he wasn’t very good at it. He was an inefficient, unskilled killer. That was his crime. And if Gosnell failed to notice a moral distinction between killing a 30-week-old fetus in the womb and slitting that same infant’s neck after it passed through the birth canal, can anyone really blame him? He is in good company. Justice John Paul Stevens, with Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg concurring, wrote in the 2000 partial-birth abortion case of *Stenberg v. Carhart*:

Although much ink is spilled today describing the gruesome nature of late-term abortion procedures, that rhetoric does not provide me a *reason* to believe that the procedure Nebraska here claims it seeks to ban is more brutal, more gruesome, or less respectful of “potential life” than the equally gruesome procedure Nebraska claims it still allows.

Had Kermit Gosnell found a second physician to back him up and then killed the third-trimester fetuses before they passed through the birth canal, he would have committed no crime under *Roe* and *Doe* or the laws of Pennsylvania. The grand jury never wrapped its mind around this chilling fact. Instead, the jurors turned their attention to recommendations for preventing “future Dr. Gosnells.”

Sensibly, the grand jury proposes annual inspections of abortion clinics. The oversight of Gosnell’s clinic was appallingly bad, even though his misdeeds were well known. Because of that neglect, Gosnell “made little effort to hide his illegal abortion practice.”

But the regulations serve the interests of adult patients, not late-term fetuses. Proper oversight would have compelled Gosnell to improve the quality of his care for mothers. Fetuses, however, could still be killed—can still be killed—in Pennsylvania at any stage and for any reason two doctors are willing to describe as relevant to the well-being of the mother.

Insofar as late-term fetuses are protected at all, it is not because the Supreme Court allows states the option of placing a few minor restrictions on the actions of abortionists. Instead, viable

fetuses—those that can survive outside the womb—are protected only by the moral sensibilities of abortionists.

Not every abortionist is a Gosnell—far from it. In fact, most doctors exercise restraint. Their moral sense, rooted in their human nature, compels them to sympathize with fetuses who resemble newborns. Many abortionists limit their practice to relatively early abortions precisely because they feel such sympathy. The pro-choice activist and feminist physician Susan Wicklund recently explained her decision to restrict her practice after observing a second-trimester abortion:

Seeing an arm pulled through the vaginal canal was shocking. One of the nurses in the room escorted me out when the color left my face. . . . From that moment, I chose to limit my abortion practice to the first trimester: 14 weeks or less.

A growing body of evidence suggests that Wicklund is not unusual. While nearly all clinics perform first-trimester abortions, fewer than one-fourth perform abortions at 20 weeks’ gestation, and only 11 percent at 24 weeks. This

Proper oversight would have compelled Gosnell to improve his care for mothers. Fetuses, however, could still be killed—can still be killed—in Pennsylvania at any stage and for any reason two doctors are willing to describe as relevant to the well-being of the mother.

is true even though profits increase with gestational age, as Kermit Gosnell keenly appreciated. Unlike him, the vast majority of abortionists draw the line somewhere in the second trimester, precisely when the fetus is becoming more recognizably human.

So, while *Roe* and *Doe* grant something close to an absolute right to abortion, abortionists quietly limit that freedom. Human nature, not laws, limits the effective scope of abortion rights in the United States. Not everyone, of course, is restrained by the common moral sense. Sociopaths like Gosnell are incapable of sympathy for other human beings. This is what enabled him to venture where almost all his colleagues fear to tread.

Even so, Gosnell's transgression is in a sense arbitrary, as perhaps he understood better than his colleagues or critics. For all their differences, many pro-life and pro-choice advocates agree that there are no morally relevant differences between killing a fetus at 15 weeks and killing a fetus at 30 weeks. We just tend to feel much worse about the latter.

The grand jury imagines that the legislators and regulators of Pennsylvania can find a way to "prevent future Dr. Gosnells." They can't. The Supreme Court has forbidden control over abortions by the democratically elected

branches of government. So as long as abortion is every woman's right, and women want abortions, and providing them continues to be profitable, Dr. Gosnell's will emerge. We can perhaps require them to kill their victims in the womb. But we can't prevent abortionists from specializing in killing viable fetuses. That is the consequence of the *Roe* and *Doe* regime.

Nevertheless, if Kermit Gosnell is executed, it will be for his abortions, not his other crimes. Although he will likely be found guilty of third-degree murder in the case of one mother, she died as a result of negligence. The grand jury made clear that her death was "not necessarily the product of specific intent to kill." Only Gosnell's abortion practice involved the intentional killing of innocent human beings. It is for this that he is charged with seven counts of first-degree murder.

So should Gosnell be convicted and find himself on death row, it will be for his specialty, late-term abortion, a practice permitted by our courts but forbidden by our consciences. It will be because the ordinary citizens serving on the trial jury in Philadelphia believe that the expansive power to destroy human life established in *Roe* and *Doe* is deeply immoral and in no way protected by our Constitution. ♦

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The Fractured Left

Good news on natural gas is bad news for a Democratic party full of environmental true-believers

By ROBERT H. NELSON

Much has been said recently about the deep tensions within the Republican party. Far less has been said about a sharp division arising inside the Democratic party.

That latter tension was front and center recently when former Pennsylvania governor Ed Rendell wrote an op-ed piece for the *New York Daily News* drawing on his experience overseeing extensive natural gas development in Pennsylvania. “If we choose to embrace natural gas, it will help us get past a number of significant economic and environmental challenges,” Rendell wrote. “On the other hand, if we let fear carry the day, we will squander another key moment to move forward together.”

Rendell soon came under strong environmentalist attack, among other things for failing to disclose that he was a consultant to a private-equity firm with stakes in a number of energy companies, some with natural gas interests.

The Obama administration is feeling the heat as well. Ignoring objections from many environmentalists, the White House in March nominated Ernest Moniz, the Cecil and Ida Green professor of physics and engineering systems at MIT, to be secretary of energy. As director of the MIT Energy Initiative, Moniz assembled an all-star cast of MIT physical and social scientists to produce a June 2011 report on “The Future of Natural Gas.” That report

concluded that “for more stringent [long-run] CO₂ emissions reductions, further de-carbonization of the energy sector will be required; *but natural gas provides a cost-effective bridge to such a low-carbon future* [italics in the original]” over the next few decades.

When Moniz’s nomination was announced he was promptly attacked by environmental groups, which raised suspicions about his relationship with ICF International, a consulting firm that has done work for the oil and gas industry. Left unsaid was that ICF also has done work for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)—and is in fact the go-to modeling firm for anyone wanting to do computer simulations of policy options involving the U.S. energy system.

In Colorado, Democratic governor John Hickenlooper has been a strong supporter of the “fracking” technologies now being used to extract oil and natural gas from shale. Hickenlooper has said that he sees increased gas production as

advancing America’s economic and environmental objectives. On April 1, Hickenlooper was heckled at a speech at the University of Denver law school; as one protester was being removed from the hall, he shouted, “We’re surrounded by oil and gas and it’s killing us!”

Recognizing the significant environmental benefits of natural gas as a source of electric power, some prominent national environmental groups, such as the Environmental Defense Fund and NRDC, have mostly supported the increase in domestic gas production—and at least by implication the use of fracking to obtain the gas. For most in the environmental movement, however, opposition to fracking has become a virtually sacred cause.

Reflecting this, perhaps, the language of some of fracking’s opponents has become extreme. One environmentalist blogger, for example, wrote recently that “fracking



Anti-fracking protesters in New York, August 2012

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is madness, a sign of a society gone completely insane and bent on self-destruction.” Another offered this: “The more we learn about a gas-drilling practice called hydraulic fracturing—or ‘fracking’—the more we see it as a zenith of violence and disconnect” in our world.

Although less hyperbolic, Sierra Club president Allison Chin, at a July 2012 “Stop the Frack Attack” rally in Washington, D.C., described the thinking behind her organization’s new “Beyond Gas” campaign, warning, “The out-of-control rush to drill has put oil and gas industry profits ahead of our health, our families, our property, our communities, and our futures. If drillers can’t extract natural gas without destroying landscapes and endangering the health of families, then we should not drill for natural gas.”

The movie *Gasland* put Hollywood’s propaganda skills to work in the anti-gas/anti-fracking crusade. And last December, the conscience of the baby-boom generation Yoko Ono and her son Sean Lennon placed a full-page ad in the *New York Times*, calling on New York governor Andrew Cuomo to “Imagine There’s No Fracking . . . and give clean energy a chance.”

Such opponents of fracking may not realize it, but there is a rapidly developing national consensus—at least outside their circles—that fracking and the abundant supplies of low-cost natural gas it can produce are a great economic and environmental windfall for the United States. As natural gas replaces coal over the next several decades in the generation of electricity, gas power plants will emit far fewer conventional pollutants than coal-fired plants and only about half the amount of carbon dioxide.

Many environmental activists refuse to accept this. As *New York Times* environmental reporter Justin Gillis wrote in March in the newspaper’s “Science Times” section, “many environmentalists believe that wind and solar power can be scaled to meet the rising demand [for electricity], especially if coupled with aggressive efforts to cut waste.” Most energy and environmental experts, however, believe otherwise. As Gillis noted, the experts favor a more realistic policy: “supplanting coal-burning power plants with natural gas plants” as a short- and medium-term bridge to carbon-free sources of energy that could be practicable by the second half of the current century.

At this stage, gas’s tremendous promise is undeniable. A February report from the Energy and National Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, “Realizing the Potential of U.S. Unconventional Natural Gas,” concluded that worldwide shale gas supplies are “enormous and readily available”; that “there are no ‘showstoppers’ (i.e., unmanageable risks that require widespread reconsideration of current recommended practices)”; that environmental and other “development risks are manageable today”; and that the

federal government should “set an energy narrative for the country that articulates a clear role for natural gas.”

Combined with rapidly increasing production of oil from shale, using the same fracking techniques, what this means is that the United States and other normally pragmatic nations have a real prospect of significantly reducing their energy dependence on Russia, Venezuela, the Persian Gulf, and other politically unstable areas.

Still, the doubters persist. A 2011 study by Cornell University’s Robert Howarth, for example, raised the fear that gas production and distribution could result in the large-scale release of more greenhouse-intensive methane gas, negating the carbon dioxide advantages of gas over coal. Most experts are much less concerned. Because methane has a short half-life in the atmosphere (10 or so years, unlike long-lived carbon dioxide), most methane leaked from gas operations during a bridge period in the first half of the twenty-first century will have disappeared long before 2100. Hence, as Michael Levi, director of the Program on Energy Security and Climate Change at the Council on Foreign Relations, explained in a January 2013 article in the journal *Climatic Change*, “contrary to recent claims, methane leakage from natural gas operations is unlikely to strongly undermine the climate benefits of substituting gas for coal in the context of bridge fuel scenarios.” This has not prevented many environmental activists from continuing to bring up the methane red herring.

One of the stranger aspects of the fracking story is that not long ago—before opposition to fracking became a requirement of environmental faith—leading environmentalists, such as Carl Pope, executive director of the Sierra Club from 1992 to 2010, were touting the environmental advantages of natural gas.

Indeed, Pope agreed in 2007 to a marriage of convenience with the Chesapeake Energy Corporation, a leading U.S. producer of natural gas. From then until 2010, the Sierra Club received more than \$26 million from Chesapeake Energy to promote the Club’s “Beyond Coal” campaign—and not coincidentally the use of natural gas as the leading replacement for coal.

Besides the greenhouse benefits of gas, another of Pope’s selling points was that living downwind from a coal-burning power plant can be a bit like smoking cigarettes. Some experts estimate that the small particulate matter and other conventional air emissions from coal-fired power plants cause some 10,000 to 30,000 Americans to “die prematurely” each year.

With the Sierra Club and other environmental organizations having demonized the oil and gas industry for such a long time, and with local opposition to gas development mounting among Sierra Club chapters in New York State and elsewhere, Pope apparently felt, however, that he could

not disclose publicly the Chesapeake Energy funding. When *Time* magazine finally revealed it in 2012, Pope's successor, Michael Brune, issued a letter of apology. Seeking to expiate the Club's sins, Brune has become a strident anti-fracking activist, even as the Sierra Club illogically continues to promote sharp reductions in coal use—and now also reductions in gas use. As a result of these twists and turns, the current Sierra Club policy appears to be the following: The United States should radically curtail use of electricity until renewables are available on a large scale sometime in the future.

Despite their strong opposition, many environmentalists seemingly don't understand the details of how gas is retrieved through the fracking process.

In February, for example, the highly regarded environmental think tank Resources for the Future (RFF) released details of a survey of 215 government, industry, university, and nongovernmental organization "experts" on the health and environmental risks posed by fracking. RFF concluded that "shale gas development is extremely controversial, in part because the potential health and environmental risks related to the drilling and production activities are not well understood."

It's really not that complicated. The extraction of gas from shale by fracking involves two stages. First, what is essentially a conventional vertical oil and gas well is drilled, typically to several thousand feet or more below the surface. It is only when drilling reaches this great depth that the more novel part of the process—applying techniques developed in Texas in the 1990s—comes into play: The well shaft previously drilled vertically is redirected to become horizontal, with the drilling continuing until the shaft extends horizontally anywhere from about a half-mile to a mile.

When the drilling is finished, water (combined with chemicals designed to reduce friction and serve other purposes) is injected from the surface into the well shaft at very high pressures, fracturing the shale rock formations far below and making it newly possible to economically extract the natural gas embedded in the shale.

Occurring far underground (often 5,000 feet below the surface, for example, in the Marcellus formation in Pennsylvania), the hydraulic fracturing of the shale (the "fracking") cannot plausibly have any direct impact on the land surface above or on the water aquifers that are typically located much closer to the surface. Indeed, some geologists think it is physically impossible.

The release of methane into aquifers can and has occasionally happened. But it is nothing new: Cement casing failures and other well-bore problems have been occurring for as long as the oil and gas industry has been drilling vertical oil and gas wells in the United States.

A January 2013 Congressional Research Service report thus explained that "the challenges of sealing off the groundwater and isolating it from possible contamination are common to the development of any oil or gas well, and are not unique to hydraulic fracturing." According to the logic of fracking critics, however, it would seem that we should be banning all oil and gas drilling everywhere in the United States.

There is, however, one new element to the fracking process that is not encountered in traditional oil and gas drilling. When the high water pressure is released after the fracturing of the shale, typically 10 to 30 percent of the water injected into the well (and occasionally much more) comes back to the surface. This "flowback water" contains both natural contaminants picked up underground during the fracturing process and the chemicals used by the driller to facilitate the fracturing. The water must therefore be disposed of safely or—as is increasingly the case—cleaned up and recycled to be used for the next gas well.

This has proved to be the most environmentally challenging part of the process. Abuses such as dumping flowback water into rivers and streams have occurred. Flowback water was sometimes sent to municipal treatment plants that didn't have the full capacity to remove all the chemicals and other contaminants. As a result of increasing regulation, however, and a growing recognition within the gas industry that its future depends on public acceptance, the treatment of flowback water has improved greatly. Thus, as the 2011 MIT report on natural gas concluded, "the environmental impacts of shale development are challenging but manageable."

The fracking hysteria sweeping through the environmental community, along with the conflicting signals coming from the White House, appears to have paralyzed EPA. On the one hand, compliance with EPA's proposed regulations and other plans to control greenhouse gas emissions under the Clean Air Act will require a large-scale shift from coal powered electricity generation to natural gas. An obvious corollary is that fracking will have to occur on a growing scale to supply the necessary low-cost gas.

But EPA refuses to explicitly acknowledge this reality. For example, in 2009 the House of Representatives asked EPA to study the impact of fracking on drinking water. EPA agreed, but took two years to begin the research. Then last December EPA issued a progress report that managed not to answer any of the key questions, promising continued research.

Why would the environmental movement be attempting to persuade Americans to adopt such a nationally self-destructive strategy as spurning the shale gas windfall with which the United States has been blessed? And why is the movement also placing large new strains on

its longstanding close ties with the Democratic party?

The answer is: The environmental movement's opposition to fossil fuels of any kind has become an article of religious faith, not to be questioned. And fracking is not the only instance. Led by longtime environmental activist Bill McKibben, similar protests and extreme language have been directed against the proposed Keystone XL pipeline, putting the White House in a no-win position. As the *Washington Post* editorialized after the State Department released its most recent environmental-impact report on the proposed pipeline in March, Keystone "has become a counterproductive obsession for many in the environmental movement."

McKibben has been a prominent figure in the environmental movement since the 1989 publication of his book *The End of Nature*. Matthew Nisbet of the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government focused a March 2013 spotlight on him. McKibben wrote in 2006 that "the science" of climate change exhaustively detailed in *The End of Nature* "was only one part of the book, and not the most important." Instead, as Nisbet relates,

the science was a [way of] warning that humans—through their pollution—had for the first time become "the most powerful force for change on the planet." Crossing this new threshold "made this historical moment entirely different from any other, filled with implications for our philosophy, our theology, our sense of self."

In short: Human beings were ever more sinfully playing God with the earth.

McKibben is following in a long American romantic tradition, dating to the New England transcendentalists such as Emerson and Thoreau, in which, as University of Wisconsin environmental historian William Cronon explains, wild areas are "frequently likened to Eden itself." As Nisbet observed, "there is also a strong religious dimension to this tradition, as these settings are where 'the supernatural lay just beneath the surface,' enabling people to 'glimpse the face of God.'"

In the view of McKibben and his devoted followers, greenhouse gases are the greatest threat ever to Nature—and to God's Creation—because their "unnatural" warming will extend to even the remotest parts of the earth.

For environmentalists such as McKibben, science is not the point. Just as a precisely accurate explanation of climate change was never the central purpose of *The End of Nature*, so the actual fate of the Keystone pipeline or even of fracking is seemingly not the greatest concern.

Drawing on the writings of Stanford University historian Richard White, Nisbet writes that "McKibben's main subject in most of his work has not been nature, but rather 'the exploration of the meaning of being human.'" As White himself has written, nature for human beings is "an instrument for putting themselves—and a larger American self—in relation to the world." Thus, White suggests, "McKibben's deepest interests are less ecological than religious and philosophical." Even when "he quotes scientists, he is most concerned with what nature signifies, which is something science can never tell him."

One can admire McKibben for his heroic effort to save our souls—there is a lot that needs saving in the world. It would be better, however, if he returned to writing books and giving speeches as the main outlet for his religious passion.

Using public debates over government policy decisions, such as whether or not to build the Keystone pipeline or to use fracking to develop the nation's immense natural gas resources, could prove a very costly form of religious edification for the American public.

Some Democratic politicians—such as Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York, whose state government continues to ban all fracking despite studies by its own environmental experts concluding that fracking offers significant economic benefits and poses environmental risks that can be adequately managed—may be endangering any national political ambitions they have. Fracking poses a good test of character. Real leaders do not sacrifice great national economic and environmental benefits when confronted with irrational public fears—sometimes deliberately stirred up by Hollywood and other opportunists—and the parochial concerns of some local groups.

It could also be costly for the environmental movement itself, which risks alienating longtime supporters and discrediting itself further if it continues to take positions that may have strong religious appeal for true believers, but which fail altogether by a more pragmatic standard—a fact becoming increasingly evident to the rest of the nation. ♦



An oil derrick outside Williston, North Dakota



Kantharos (drinking vessel), sixth century B.C.

Their Sporting Life

Of games and gladiators, Greeks and Romans. BY J.E. LENDON

Drawing all eyes willing or not, like a reeling beggar on a subway platform, the Olympics have become such a familiar spectacle that we rarely stop to think about their oddness. But our Olympics are, in fact, a bizarre piece of Victorian historical reenactment, a re-creation, after 1,500 years of desuetude, of a solemn festival of Zeus, at which members of the ancient Hellenic aristocracy performed feats of

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The Victor's Crown
A History of Ancient Sport from Homer to Byzantium
by David Potter
Oxford, 448 pp., \$24.95

speed and strength in honor of the god.

The succession from antique to modern was made easy because, quite by accident, we and the Greeks are two of the few historical societies to devote great attention and resources to athletics. And by another helpful accident, our own athletic culture is very past-minded: Collecting statistics and reciting past glories seem to be the best ways we have to talk about sports, an activity

that has proved strangely impervious to the puzzled poking of social science, of sociology and psychology.

We enjoy sports (except those of us who enjoy *disliking* them more), and we spend our wealth on sports, but we have very little idea why. The Greeks found their own sports just as hard to understand, for they never knew exactly why sports (at the outset, in Homer) did honor to fallen heroes or why, in later times, games became a form of worshipping the gods. Rather than think too hard about it, the Greeks did just what we do in the face of similar perplexity: trace the origins not of the phenomenon in general, but of specific athletic festivals, like the

DE AGOSTINI / GETTY IMAGES

Olympics, through history and myth.

Passing into the realm of the specific, however, the apparent familiarity of Greek sports quickly collapses. And in this enjoyable and witty book, David Potter impressively argues that it is Roman sports—gladiators, beast-fighters, chariot-racing—that best mirror our own, not the games of the Greeks.

Ancient Greek athletics, he reminds us, were always irredeemably yachty. Training—ideally done one-on-one—was expensive, and although many Greek cities had public gymnasia, they were for those who did not need to work for a living: In some towns, men who sold goods in the market (to say nothing of slaves and freedmen) were absolutely excluded. Greek athletes could make fortunes, especially under the early Roman Empire, but wealth was required for entry into their club to begin with. Not surprisingly, athletic dynasties developed, sometimes with retired athletes training their sons. And a successful Greek athlete bargained with his city, or other cities if his own proved recalcitrant, for just the privileges—free meals for life, exemption from taxation, freedom from helping in civic administration—that members of the aristocracy prized; privileges that later, during the height of the Roman Empire, might encourage a rich young man with different talents to pursue a career as a professor of rhetoric.

In addition to their social exclusivity, Greek athletics were inextricably linked to Greek admiration for the naked male body, and to the facets of Greek sexuality—particularly sexual relationships between older men and teenagers—that we find so alarming we try not to think too much about them. (Unless we happen to be one of those academics who prefers to think about them all the time.) Although at the origins of Greek athletics participants were clothed, nakedness became the activity's defining quality, extending even to sports (such as boy jockeys riding bareback) where one imagines that nudity will have been somewhat uncomfortable. The gymnasium was "the naked place." One's trainer, the *gymnastes*, was essentially

"Mr. Naked." The verb for exercise was "to strip." And always, there was acute anxiety to keep the older gymnasium-visitors away from the boys. The repetition of such rules over the centuries speaks for itself.

If the strangeness of Greek sports has to be pointed out to us, that of the Roman games is patent. Indeed, we all seem to be brought up to think of gladiatorial combat as the practice that makes the Romans irreducibly different from us (as well as more interestingly cruel). But, as Potter points out, Romans appreciated gladiators not for the killing and the gore, but for their brave display of strength and technique in the face of death. The best modern parallel, it seems to me, is Spanish bullfighting, in which the death of the bull is almost an afterthought. What is admired by the fans—the reason why people go to bullfights—is the ballet of bull and toreador, the grace and dignity of the one mastering the bestial spirit of the other. (The parallel between Rome's bloody games and bullfighting is made stronger by the beastfighters who often shared the bill with gladiators.)

Gladiators did die—probably more died from sepsis from nonfatal cuts than from being killed outright on the sand—but most matches were fought to the surrender of the less-skilled competitor, and both gladiators went on to fight another day. Like bullfighters, gladiators were highly skilled professionals, the product of years of intense training. They were showmen more than slaughterers.

In the immense extent of Roman history, moreover, gladiatorial combat flowered for a term, and then wilted naturally away. Tastes changed, and gladiators could not, in the long run, compete with the Romans' first love: chariot-racing. The Romans believed that chariot-racing was nearly coeval with their city; when a new Rome, gathered of human scraps and scrapings, lacked for women, Romulus, Rome's mythical founder, invited the neighboring Sabine folk to chariot races and seized theirs. In fact, Roman chariot-racing was borrowed early

from Greece, where tyrants and men of wealth grazed horses and hired drivers to race their teams at Olympia.

But the Romans made chariot-racing corporate. A rich Roman wishing to sponsor games did not breed horses himself, but contracted for steeds and drivers from the four established teams: the Greens, Blues, Reds, and Whites. Under the empire, these circus factions took on nearly all the administration of the racing, and (in a very modern touch) the weaker Reds and the Whites became wholly owned subsidiaries of the Blues and the Greens. Top drivers operated as free agents of nearly modern cynicism, leaping from faction to faction in search of better horses and higher money, and, like top professional athletes today, they could accumulate enormous fortunes.

Roman sports, however, had none of the social splendor of the Greek. Poor-boy-made-good was part of the mystique of chariot-racing; and as for gladiators, the historian Thomas Wiedemann maintained that the moral uplift of gladiatorial combat for the audience lay exactly in watching the most socially abject of creatures bootstrap themselves to wealth and fame by practicing *virtus*, or physical courage—the quality that Romans liked to think most perfectly encompassed their national character.

But there we go again, trying to conjure all of Roman culture from the blood on the sand, trying to make gladiatorial combat into the single special activity that defined the differentness of Rome. And that, Potter reminds us, would be as odd as trying to reduce the culture of the Greeks to their eager pursuit of *gloios*, the mixture of sand, oil, and sweat that a Greek athlete scraped off his body after exercise, and which was prized for its medical and magical properties.

We must not be ashamed of enjoying sports for sports' sake, and oddness for oddness's sake—as the reader of *The Victor's Crown* is invited to do again and again—content that, in history, the eye-catchingly strange is not necessarily important, but also that what is important is not necessarily all that strange. ♦

Is the Pen Mightier?

*The moving hand writes, and having written,
moves to keyboarding.* BY CHARLOTTE ALLEN

An angel face:—its sunny wealth of hair
In radiant ripples bathed the graceful throat
And dimpled shoulders; round the rosy curve
Of the sweet mouth a smile seemed wandering over;
While in the depths of azure fire that gleamed
Beneath the drooping lashes, slept a world
Of eloquent meaning, passionate yet pure—
Dreary—subdued—but oh, how beautiful!

Edgar A. Poe.

Penmanship of Edgar Allan Poe (ca. 1848)

My handwriting is execrable. I routinely desecrate the elegant, engraved stationery that my husband gave me as a birthday present with cramped, misshapen, and only partly legible scrawls. This despite the years I spent in parochial school being drilled by the nuns in the Palmer method, the loopy but highly readable cursive hand developed by Austin Norman Palmer during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Palmer method dominated penmanship education in American public schools until the forces of progressivist pedagogy took over. It lingered on at Roman Catholic schools until the Second Vatican Council, when most of the sisters who had been its teaching mainstay jumped over the wall. The Palmer method became associated with repression and regimentation. And indeed, the nun who taught my third grade class made us practice our letters with wooden pens whose

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The Missing Ink
The Lost Art of Handwriting
by Philip Hensher
Faber & Faber, 288 pp., \$26

steel nibs we dipped into inkwells set in holes cut into the oak desks on cast-iron runners that our school still featured—even though seating pupils in rigid rows was already deemed backward by advanced educational theorists.

I'm not surprised to learn the Palmer method survives today mostly among home-schoolers and at Christian academies. What did surprise me was my learning about a year ago that cursive writing of any kind—that is, writing that joins up the letters in a word—is no longer taught at an increasing number of schools. Over the past few years, school districts in Hawaii, Indiana, Florida, Kansas, and North Carolina have decided not to teach young people any sort of handwriting beyond the “ball and stick” printing that will make you look like a first-grader when you sign your tax return.

Cursive is also conspicuously absent from the Common Core Standards for K-12 education currently being pushed by the Obama administration and adopted by about 45 of the 50 states. The idea is that handwriting, especially cursive handwriting, is obsolete in the computer age, and that electronically hip youngsters are better off using their school time to master “keyboarding”—although touch-typing a QWERTY arrangement of keys may itself be a fast-obsolescing skill in the age of the iPhone, which requires a single digit to maneuver.

Such a state of affairs, explored in this rambling, loosely historical book by the British novelist Philip Hensher, may be unfortunate, but it is perhaps the logical result of the development of handwriting itself, whose very purpose has always been to speed up the transmission of words. For millennia, the speediest technology for word transmission was the hand of a scribe wielding a writing instrument—a reed pen, stylus, or quill—on a durable and portable medium. The simpler the writing system, and the more portable the medium, the better.

Ancient Egyptian scribes substituted a pared-down “demotic” script suited to ordinary transactions for the elaborate hieroglyphics with which they decorated their temples. The Mesopotamian clay tablets that had to be stamped with cuneiform characters, and then oven-baked, were rendered obsolete by papyrus rolls that could be written upon quickly with ink. Fragile papyrus succumbed to nearly indestructible parchment, and rolls became compact, bound codices that were the first books. Paper—thinner and cheaper to produce from rags and wood pulp than parchment (which required the tedious treatment of animal skins)—traveled from Handynasty China through the Islamic world to medieval Western Europe.

Writing systems themselves traveled a similar trajectory, based on speed and ease of production. The rise, toward the end of the second millennium B.C., of the Phoenician alphabet, with its 22 phonetically based symbols, was a godsend for the scribes of the ancient

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Mediterranean world—from Armenia to Rome. The scribes worked their own simplifying variations on the symbols. The Romans might chisel formal serifed letters into marble (the basis for the capital letters of modern typefaces), but the scribes who wrote on papyrus rolls and wooden tablets pared down those fancy capitals into a more streamlined minuscule that became the basis for today's lower case.

There was constant demand, especially as Western Europe started to become prosperous and literate during the 12th century, for speedier production of books and documents of every kind. Hence the development of Gothic script (familiar today via the banner fonts of newspapers and metal-band paraphernalia), whose narrow, angular letters composed mostly of vertical strokes enabled scribes to cram the maximum number of words onto a page with the minimum amount of effort.

All this came to an end with the invention of the movable-type printing press, around 1450. Still, there remained a need to produce a “fair hand” in documents and correspondence, both business and personal. During the 15th century, the Italian humanists developed a graceful script that slanted obliquely to the right and featured the joining of letters. This “italic” penmanship, one of whose virtues was that it allowed the writer to lift his pen from the page less frequently, and thus write even more speedily than the Gothic scribes, became the basis of modern cursive.

One of its offshoots was “copperplate,” so named because it was modeled after a hand used on copper engravings, whose clarity and delicate flourishes made it the dominant script of the 18th and 19th centuries in England and America (the signed fair copy of the Declaration of Independence was executed in copperplate), and it lives on among calligraphers.

During the 1840s, an American, Platt Rogers Spencer, developed a simplified form of copperplate and also set up a school for teaching his new style of penmanship. Thanks to the energy of Spencer and his disciples, who traversed the American heartland promoting their invention, Spencerian

script—most famously preserved in the Coca-Cola and Ford Motor Company logos—became the American standard until the 1920s, when the typewriter rendered it otiose for business correspondence and the Palmer method supplanted it in schools. Now, even the Palmer method—along with every other handwriting method—is on life support; there are even apps for making out your grocery-shopping list. Unthinkable though it may be, handwriting has either reached the end of its useful life, or most iPhone-thumbing people think it has.

I'm now one of the few human beings I know who still corresponds with a pen on stationery. (Whether anyone can read what I write is a different story.) Hensher, according to his own account, is another. I can't recommend his book, though. Maybe it's the shopworn anti-Babbitty: A chapter on Spencer sneers at the “practical, business purposes” for which the writing master designed his script and “the fine, upstanding young men and women of the new high school at Dead Man's Gulch” who were to learn it. (Hensher seems to be one of those Britons who thinks that every small town in 19th-century America was named Dead Man's Gulch.)

Maybe it's the book's general disorganization. The chapters flit from a denunciation of the “militaristic” drills involved in the Palmer method (Hensher is a fan of “child-centered” pedagogy) to a history of graphology (the pseudoscience of analyzing people's personality via their penmanship) to a disquisition on Proust's use of handwriting in his fiction to a lumbering account of Hensher's own efforts to buy himself a new fountain pen.

Maybe it's the pompous tone: “I've come to the conclusion that handwriting is good for us.” Or the cringe-making efforts at wit, as in this purported sample of a copperplate wedding invitation: “Mr and Mrs Edward Boffin / Unwillingly invite you to the wedding of / Their Pregnant Daughter / Ethel / To the Worthless Wretch Who Did the Deed.” Har, har. Or maybe it's the tedious “interviews” that pad out the thin material—with anonymous subjects complaining about their penmanship.

“I want everyone to maintain an intimate and unique connection with words and ink and paper and the movement of hand and arm,” Hensher writes. Well, yes, I agree. But I'd rather read those sentiments in some other book. ♦

BCA

The Big Store

The mythology of small business meets a retailing giant.

BY JAY WEISER

Not long ago, New York City stopped a Walmart store from being built in its downtrodden East New York neighborhood, another defeat in the giant discounter/grocer's six-year effort to enter the five boroughs. Small retailers and unions, in prevailing, embraced a century-old tradition of political suppression

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The Great A&P and the Struggle for Small Business in America

by Marc Levinson
Hill and Wang, 384 pp., \$16

of retail competition. Notwithstanding the loud American romance with entrepreneurship, Marc Levinson's history of the erstwhile supermarket giant A&P—the Walmart of its day—rewrites the story. Inefficient small

businesses often entrenched themselves through regulation, with free market innovators and consumers eking out only partial victories.

Excavating decades of lawsuit records, not to mention trade journals like *Central Manufacturing District Magazine*, Levinson has pieced together the history of this closely held, publicity-averse company. For almost a century, A&P, controlled by George H. Hartford, and then sons

John deployed information in radical new ways: by reducing working capital needs through low prices and high volume, and, in that pre-spreadsheet era, analyzing consumer demand by region and store with elaborate tables. But George created the accounting systems for a retail empire that had reached 9,236 stores by 1923. (Similarly, Walmart's technology-driven logistics revolution has been slighted in favor of more glamorous hard-

losing a tailor's job in the Depression, opened a candy store that the family operated from 6 A.M. until 2 A.M. seven days a week. The small retail niche became ever more tenuous as A&P squeezed out distribution costs and cut prices.

By the time of the Depression, as hardpressed consumers became even more price-conscious, small retailers found their political voice in an anti-chain-store movement—first in certain states, and then nationally, spearheaded by the populist Texas congressman Wright Patman. This dovetailed with the New Deal push to cartelize the economy by giving favored interest groups the power to limit competition to support their incomes. Small businesses, present in every legislative district, were ripe for sentimentalization and protective legislation. (Most of these companies were tiny, undercapitalized startups that rapidly went bust, often burning through New Deal-era subsidies such as Small Business Administration loans, but the small business job-creation myth still managed to persist into last year's presidential campaign.)

Confiscatory state chain-store taxes penalized A&P for its low prices and prevented market-driven expansion. Rep. Patman's signature achievement, the labyrinthine Robinson-Patman Act, legislated against "price discrimination" on the theory—repeatedly debunked by economists over the decades—that in the highly fragmented and competitive retail field, chains were selling below cost to drive small competitors out of business. By creating potential liability when chains sought volume discounts or ran sales, Robinson-Patman limited cost-saving innovations.

(My grandmother found A&P's cost advantage such that, rather than have her wholesaler deliver bulk sugar for her candy store's homemade syrup, she walked a mile to the local A&P, paid retail, and dragged the 10-pound sugar sack back herself.)

The anti-chain assault wiped out A&P's cost advantage and profits, and kept inefficient small retailers in business, thus raising consumer costs.



Outside the A&P (ca. 1960) . . .

George L. and John, led serial revolutions resulting in the rise of what are now part of our everyday retail landscape: branded goods, prepackaging, self-service, volume buying, vertical integration, and, finally, supermarkets. Like Microsoft a century later, A&P was rarely the first mover, but its refinements prevailed. It could offer the lowest prices through innovations and economies of scale, and it freely cannibalized existing business lines to catch the next wave.

John Hartford was the company's retail genius for over 60 years, but Levinson underestimates the "inside" finance/accounting brother George. An information revolution, no less than technological and manufacturing changes, was transforming retail distribution three-quarters of a century before large businesses began adopting mainframe computers in the 1950s.

ware and software firms like Apple.)

A&P was not unique. F.W. Woolworth created a giant international five-and-dime empire, while regional food chains like Safeway and Kroger and British chains like Sainsbury and Tesco were moving down the same path; but as late as 1939, A&P had more supermarkets with sales over \$250,000 than all other American retailers combined.

Early 20th-century food retailing was fragmented and small-scale. Every neighborhood or town had grocers, greengrocers, butchers, bakers, and dairymen. Tiny retailers, supported by networks of small jobbers and regional wholesalers, eked out a living from tiny trade areas by working long hours serving by hand from behind counters. For some, this offered a promise of independence or, in bad times, survival. My grandfather, after

Between 1929 and 1939, retailers' gross margins (the markup between wholesale and retail prices) on foods such as produce widened by 10 percent. The assault also distorted the urban fabric of the country, with dire future effects. In Great Britain, without anti-chain-store legislation, national retailers offered groceries on shopping streets, keeping neighborhoods livable. In the United States, taxes forced A&P to close 5,950 small stores during 1937-40; they were replaced by fewer, large supermarkets, often in automobile-dependent suburbs. The new format—completely self-service, and offering a far wider line of items—reduced costs even further, driving down prices. This made urban neighborhoods ever less desirable: Their expensive small grocers, featuring limited, low-turnover inventories, created the “food deserts” now bemoaned by progressives in low-income neighborhoods like East New York.

As the tech industry and Walmart later found, firms in the government's sights are inevitably drawn into regulatory rent-seeking and Washington's pay-to-play culture, lest opponents have the field to themselves. In the wake of the anti-chain assault, privately held A&P began making political contributions and engaged Washington's holy trinity of lawyers, lobbyists, and public relations firms.

The demands did not end there—as Levinson's most explosive revelation, based on 1945 congressional hearings, shows. In 1939, while Rep. Patman pressed a national chain-store bill that would have devastated A&P, President Roosevelt let the Hartfords know that he wanted them to lend his ne'er-do-well son Elliott \$200,000 (approximately \$3.2 million in current dollars) to buy some Texas radio stations. Elliott and his uncle, Eleanor Roosevelt's alcoholic brother Hall, met with John Hartford in the latter's apartment. The Roosevelts got FDR on the phone, and the president assured Hartford that “it was a sound business proposition and a fine thing.” Hartford, who “did not want to do anything to incur the enmity of

the President,” immediately agreed to the loan. When Elliott went into the Army Air Forces and the business got into trouble, the president arranged for Jesse Jones, head of the federal Reconstruction Finance Corporation, to meet with Hartford to settle the debt. In their December 1941 to March 1942 meetings—immediately after U.S. entry into World War II—Hartford, undoubtedly aware that Jones influenced access to credit and that administration ration-

successors knew little of the postwar Western boom regions. Worse, company ownership was concentrated in the family's foundation, and mad-cap nephew Huntington Hartford and other relatives demanded big dividends rather than reinvestment in the company. By the 1970s, when Walmart started its ascent, A&P was a shadow of itself. Today it hangs on as Manhattan's semi-upscale Food Emporium chain, pricier than discounters



... and inside the A&P (1942).

ing would control grocery supplies, agreed to write down Elliott's loan (by 98 percent) to \$4,000.

FDR was not one to stay bought, even when he was the salesman. Later in 1942, his Justice Department anti-trust head, Thurman Arnold, filed a criminal monopoly suit against A&P due to its low prices and vertical integration. Arnold prevailed, despite A&P's national market share of only 12 percent and the company's long-standing policy of not pricing below cost. (As the subsequent founder of Washington's Arnold & Porter law firm, Arnold made a lucrative career of defending corporations against similar claims.)

The antitrust suit didn't stop A&P's rapid postwar growth, though; poor corporate governance did. In 1951, the retail genius John Hartford died in the saddle at age 79, and his

but not foodie enough to compete with Whole Foods.

Over the course of 150 years, Joseph Schumpeter's “creative destruction” worked. But along the way, under the guise of protecting small businesses, rent-seeking interests used regulation in a successful assault on consumer living standards. Today, anti-chain legislation dresses in the yuppie garb of land-use regulation, such as San Francisco's Proposition G (2006) restricting chains outside the downtown core. So while the *Financial Times's* mystery shopper admires “a black and yellow slash-neck, batwing-sleeved blouse with a contrasting Chinese garden scene on one-half for \$920” in Hayes Valley, San Francisco's beleaguered working class can either schlep to Union Square or annihilate its paychecks in the neighborhood boutiques. ♦

In Search of God

David Ferry, poet of inquiry and doubt.

BY DIANE SCHARPER

David Ferry's latest poems look at the tantalizing possibility of life after death and the existence of God. But it's a God that the poet doesn't know and whose name escapes him. What he does know is that he feels a presence, and poems both hide and connect him to that presence. Or, as the 88-year-old Ferry so plaintively puts it:

The words are like a scrim upon a page . . .

I can dimly see there's something or someone, there. . . .

Tell me your name. How was it that I knew you?

What happens when we die? The question not only informs "Scrim," in which those lines appear, but it also infuses every poem in *Bewilderment*, which has won the National Book Award. If money brings happiness, Ferry, who received \$100,000 for the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize and \$10,000 for the National Book Award for Poetry, should be overjoyed. But judging from his work, he's anything but happy: His poems fuse metaphysical language with colloquialisms and exude a kind of freshness—but they tend to be melancholic.

The book's epigraph, "In Memory of Anne Ferry" (his wife died in 2006), sets the elegiac tone which is repeated throughout with subtle variations:

You lie in our bed as if an orchard were over us.

You are what's fallen from those fatal boughs.

Where will we go when they send us away from here?

Diane Scharper is the author, most recently, of *Reading Lips, And Other Ways to Overcome a Disability*.

Bewilderment
New Poems and Translations
by David Ferry
Chicago, 115 pp., \$18



The motif is picked up in several poems. In "Soul," a contemporary sonnet, he asks:

What am I doing inside this old man's body?

I feel like I'm the insides of a lobster . . .

Where is it that she I loved has gone to, as

This cold sea water's washing over my back?

Most of the poems are difficult. Some are zen-like and consist of only a few words, with large white spaces and no punctuation; others are written in a stream-of-consciousness style. Many comment on the preceding poem, making the collection feel like a play. In addition, a few poems are written as two vertical lines which can be read separately or together, with the whole being greater than the sum of its parts.

Ferry searches through details: moments remembered, things said or left unsaid, a facial expression, a landscape whose features seem to resonate.

He connects readers to the past, present, and (possible) future, to ancient Greek and Roman classics, and to the Hebrew Bible. (His rendition of the offering of Isaac is chilling.) Ferry's territory covers everything from Flanders Field to the inside of the Trojan horse, from sitting with a friend who suffers from Parkinson's disease to imagining the afterlife.

As he burrows into his subject, he depicts the world through the subject's eyes. Take "'Somebody in a Bar,' After Edward Hopper," in which a "slope-shouldered" patron stares into the mirror behind the bar, *with its bare bulb's black glare*, and feels the existential loneliness which seems to pulse through this collection, and through Hopper's work as well.

Addressing the separation that occurs at death and the survivor's feelings of bewilderment, these poems try to find words for those who are, as Ferry puts it, "dislanguaged." The collection also includes a section of poems by Ferry's deceased friend Arthur Gold, with each of Gold's poems followed by a poem from Ferry commenting on (and sometimes critiquing) the Gold poem.

Bewilderment also contains Ferry's translations of poems (all dealing with the loss of a loved one) by Virgil, Cavafy, Catullus, Horace, Rilke, and others, as well as Ferry's own poems, many of which are written in response to the translations. Ferry's translations are likewise empowered by events from his own experience, as in his rendition of "Orpheus and Eurydice," which is fueled by Ferry's woe at the loss of his wife. The poem, which ends with Orpheus weeping and singing beside the river Strymon, is followed by "Lake Water," in which Ferry sits beside a lake remembering his wife's final moments.

In addition to echoing each other, the poems resonate with literary allusions—one can hear W.H. Auden, Robert Frost, even e.e. cummings. All have a musical quality, relying primarily on the hypnotic effect of rhyme, repetition, alliteration, and assonance as they arrive at an always adroit, if not always perfect, ending. ♦

Left Behind

Sometimes indoctrination works, and sometimes it doesn't. BY ABIGAIL THERNSTROM

After Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were executed in 1953, it was no surprise that the adoptive parents of their two sons chose to send the orphaned brothers to the Little Red School House, a New York private school. In the McCarthy era, Little Red and its high school, Elizabeth Irwin, were havens for teachers displaced from the public schools by their refusal to sign a loyalty oath to the United States government. The schools offered students a very distinctive—Stalinist—political education, and parents knew their children would not be corrupted by bourgeois capitalist values.

To this day, the schools' combined website describes both Little Red and Elizabeth Irwin as "progressive." They are "committed to social justice," which they define as "equity in race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic means and family structure." This commitment, in the 1950s and '60s, meant allegiance to the American Communist party (CPUSA).

Author Dina Hampton does not deny the schools' dedication to political indoctrination. The students, she writes, "grew up in a counter-culture hothouse steeped in progressive pedagogy and radical politics." At assemblies, everyone would stand to sing the "Negro National Anthem" ("Lift Every Voice and Sing") instead of the "Star-Spangled Banner." Social studies, taught by "a dyed-in-the-wool Marxist," formed the core of the curriculum, "with emphasis placed on the

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Little Red
*Three Passionate Lives
Through the Sixties and Beyond*
by Dina Hampton
PublicAffairs, 336 pp., \$25.99

exploration of oppressed cultures." The school took students on field trips searching for the downtrodden proletariat (my description, not Hampton's). They stayed away from ordinary workers—most of whom would have been violently anti-Communist, of course—but met instead with those on strike or laboring as migrant workers; they toured Pennsylvania steel mills and coal mines.

I was an Elizabeth Irwin student in the early 1950s, and I remember clearly the curriculum and those politically heavy-handed trips. But neither made the intended impression on me, for reasons I don't entirely know—except that I was always terrible at listening to my elders.

Hampton provides little information about the school itself. But *Little Red's* subtitle, *Three Passionate Lives Through the Sixties and Beyond*, offers those lives as her subject. They are Tom Hurwitz, Angela Davis, and Elliott Abrams. Hurwitz and Davis were both in the class of 1961; Abrams graduated in 1965. Hampton views all three as "radicals," a term of endearment, but only when speaking of those on the left. Amazingly, she equates the radicalism of the Black Panthers, the Weathermen, and the CPUSA with the views of Jeane Kirkpatrick, Henry Jackson, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Nathan Glazer, and Irving Kristol—members of what she calls the "radical neoconservative movement that came to power with the Reagan administration."

Elliott Abrams was clearly included to make the story ostensibly fair and balanced; but Davis and Hurwitz are heroes, while Abrams is conservative and, thus, a villain. Nevertheless, Hampton calls all three "remarkable" graduates who would "continue to impact the course of United States history." Abrams, a prolific writer on foreign policy, served in the State Department under Reagan and in the White House under George W. Bush, and got into trouble during the Iran-Contra flap. He has, indeed, played an important role in our public life. But Angela Davis and Tom Hurwitz? They were both red diaper babies who made mischief of one sort or another.

Neither did anything admirable to warrant the attention Hampton lavishes on them; they just happen to have attended the same school from which the author herself graduated in the late 1970s. The high point of Hurwitz's life, it seems, was his involvement in the 1968 Columbia student protest, when he and others occupied university buildings, took the acting dean and other administrators hostage, rifled through the president's files, and taped a Che Guevara quotation above the dean's office door: "In revolution one wins or dies."

Apparently, the "revolution" was fun. In Hurwitz's account, there was a lot of sex, and the revolutionary goal seems to have been having a lot of sex with strangers. In the fall of 1968 and spring of 1969, Hurwitz traveled the country for Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) in the company of, among others, Obama pal Bill Ayers. "In every town there was a woman who wanted to sleep with you," he reports.

Hampton's own description of Hurwitz suggests he was basically a far-left playboy. In the summer of 1964, students risked their lives trying to register black voters in Mississippi, but Hurwitz never did anything remotely equivalent. Why put your life on the line when you could belong to what amounted to a college fraternity that gave nonstop political parties? Hurwitz was a perpetual adolescent, self-centered and self-righteous.

In fact, Tom Hurwitz and his friends

were on a mission to nowhere. SDS hoped to force the United States to withdraw troops from Vietnam—and American troops *did* come home in 1975, but no thanks to student protests. In October 1969, the Weathermen organized a demonstration in Chicago that became known as the “days of rage.” Homes and shops were vandalized, police officers assaulted. Similar violent demonstrations were

while he quickly faded from public sight, she has not been altogether forgotten. Some American universities continue to give her a platform. Pitzer College, for instance, invited her to be the 2012 commencement speaker, and the school’s president, Laura Skandera Trombley, introduced Davis as a “beautiful African-American woman . . . unafraid to practice her convictions.” In 1969, Trombley explained, Davis

ending up on the FBI’s Most Wanted list, and was eventually captured. The Communist party supplied her with an attorney who argued that Davis and her colleagues in the courtroom shootout were, in fact, political prisoners—as all black inmates were said to be. Julian Bond, Marlon Brando, Jane Fonda, and other celebrities rallied to her defense. She was acquitted.

Throughout *Little Red*, Hampton is in a swoon over Angela Davis. She provides a detailed and starry-eyed account of Davis’s long service to the moribund CPUSA, which reads like a press release: Angela joins the party; Angela is on the central committee; Angela is running for vice president of the United States on the Communist ticket! Nowhere is there any recognition that the CPUSA was a wholly owned subsidiary of the Soviet Union, which secretly provided most of its funding. Hampton suggests that the Communists were idealistic—all things “idealistic” being good by definition—but by the time Davis had joined, its membership was microscopic and its influence nil. Indeed, Hampton doesn’t seem to understand that there had to be something seriously wrong with anyone who could remain a Communist after the Moscow show trials of 1936-38, Stalin’s purges, and the Hitler-Stalin Pact.

Elizabeth Irwin had said that she hoped her school would always be a place where “heresy will be looked upon as possible truth,” and the school did celebrate heresy from mainstream American culture—but not from Stalinism. Indeed, *Little Red* was an appalling school, and from its current website, I think it’s fair to say that it still is. Nevertheless, it continues to have a clientele of old and new New York lefties who have the means to buy a private education with a curriculum that will keep their offspring politically close to home.

Little Red is appalling, too. But readers with some anthropological curiosity may find its picture illuminating; it offers an introduction to a bizarre political tribe that most ordinary Americans have never encountered, but that has never entirely disappeared. ♦

GETTY IMAGES



Angela Davis '61 at the Soviet International Women's Seminar, Moscow (1972)

staged across the country over the next few years. Yet the result was simply to deepen working-class disdain of privileged college kids who didn’t have to go to Vietnam.

This band—of which Hurwitz was a member—enraged ordinary Americans, but intimidated Columbia and other institutions of higher learning, including Harvard, where similar protests occurred. In the face of appalling student behavior, the schools were paralyzed. Well, not quite: Columbia *did* eventually take bold action, appointing a study group to consider student discipline. All this might seem funny in retrospect, but it was not at the time. Universities never recovered; they caved to the student demands of the era, and kept caving and caving. The protests accelerated a process of cultural change for the worse, and from which there was no going back.

Tom Hurwitz was not a serious person, but Angela Davis was; and

had been fired from her teaching post at UCLA for “publicly voicing her opposition to the Vietnam war, racism, sexism, the prison industrial complex, and her support for gay rights and other social justice movements.” Of course, if opposition to racism and support for gay rights were firing offenses, almost no one would be left teaching. And President Trombley somehow left out Davis’s long membership in the CPUSA, her close ties to the Black Panthers, her devotion to the murderer/prison radical George Jackson, and other such biographical details.

Angela Davis joined the CPUSA in 1968, an “exciting year to be in the party,” Hampton writes. If Davis was looking for excitement, she soon found it: Two years after she signed up, she was involved in a courtroom shootout for which she had purchased the guns, and she was charged with responsibility for the deaths of four people, including a judge. She fled,

Epic Lite

Impressive intentions yield less-than-impressive results.

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

What does it mean to say a movie is an “epic”? An epic uses its characters and plot to illuminate a place, an era, an entire society. We are constantly being reminded, through camera work and art direction, that what we’re watching is something larger and more socially significant than its plot. The action is always placed within a wider context, historically and geographically, and the characters we’re watching move through the story as though they are actors on a grand stage.

The best analogy is to the omniscient narrative voice of Charles Dickens, who both anticipated and helped create the techniques of cinematic storytelling decades before the first motion picture was made. Dickens tells his tales from, simultaneously, 30,000 feet above and inches away from his characters; he is not only talking about *them* but about the society that houses them—the natural world in which they live, and the moral universe in which they operate.

The Place Beyond the Pines is a Dickensian epic that doesn’t look like a Dickensian epic—and, alas, looks do matter. The director and cowriter Derek Cianfrance has made a movie that spans two decades, features three independent storylines, and involves bank robbery, police corruption, political ambition, fathers and sons, industrial decline, generational conflict, and interracial marriage. It has the kind of scope one finds in the works of the great classical Italian director Luchino Visconti, whose sweeping films *Rocco and His Brothers* and *The Leopard* combine historical grandeur with familial drama (and were a signal influence on

The Place Beyond the Pines

Directed by Derek Cianfrance



Derek Cianfrance

Francis Ford Coppola when he came to make his towering epic, *The Godfather*).

Cianfrance clearly wanted to make a masterpiece about life in postindustrial America, with the added heft of the biblical admonition that sins of the fathers are passed on to the sons. But he made the unwise decision to film *The Place Beyond the Pines* as though it were a tiny little slip of a movie. It has all the patented stylistic effects: There’s the jiggly camera that pushes in on its characters and mostly stays mushed up against them. There’s the low lighting that sets everything in a kind of rainy gloom. There’s the script that sounds half-improvised, with weird, actorly pauses that are intended to reflect the reality of the way we speak but actually only reflect the discomfort of a performer who doesn’t know what he’s supposed to say next. All of this has the effect of shrinking the movie’s narrative canvas, not broadening it, as its story and scope demand.

Luke (Ryan Gosling), who makes his living working for a traveling carnival, returns with it to a depressed city in upstate New York to discover that on his

last trip he had impregnated a waitress (Eva Mendes) who has given birth to his son. Luke decides to stay around to be a father, but he has no skills, and takes to robbery. Eventually he ends up in a confrontation with a rookie cop (Bradley Cooper), who becomes a hero as a result. Fifteen years later, the cop’s son and Luke’s son end up in the same high school, with discomfiting results.

Cianfrance made his reputation two and a half years ago with the powerful and cringe-inducing *Blue Valentine*; its indie style was appropriate to its time-fragmented account of a disastrous marriage. *The Place Beyond the Pines* is a complex tale with several main characters who intersect in glancing ways. There is nothing intimate about it, and yet Cianfrance filmed it in exactly the same manner as *Blue Valentine*. Is that because he was limited by a modest budget, and had to keep the camera close in because he could not afford the expense of making sure the period details (part of the movie is set in the mid-1990s) were accurate? Perhaps.

But even so, there’s something undercooked about *The Place Beyond the Pines* that is exacerbated by its failure as an epic. Visconti took his time in his movies, as Coppola did in *The Godfather*, in part because he took such care establishing the geography and history. These are stately films, made with authority, that take you by the hand and give you a tour of the grounds. Cianfrance takes it slow as well—*The Place Beyond the Pines* runs a little short of two and a half hours—but the movie isn’t at all stately. Mostly, Cianfrance uses his extra time to drag out individual scenes. I’m sure this made Ryan Gosling and Bradley Cooper, its two leading players, very happy. Actors love to have the camera dwell on their silences and brooding stares and tears that well in the eye but do not fall down the cheek. But it’s not good when a movie stops dead in its tracks, and this one does several times.

Cianfrance deserves credit for his ambition and his intelligence; if you are a frequent moviegoer, *The Place Beyond the Pines* is worth seeing. It tries to do things most American movies no longer even bother to attempt. But trying and succeeding are very different things. ♦

ASSOCIATED PRESS

John Podhoretz, editor of Commentary, is THE WEEKLY STANDARD’s movie critic.

"Following revelations that his ex-wife accused him of trespassing on her property earlier this year, former South Carolina governor Mark Sanford (R) has lost the support of his national party. . . . The National Republican Congressional Committee on Wednesday took the unusual step of telegraphing that it will not spend money on his special election campaign."
—Washington Post, April 17, 2013

PARODY



National Republican Congressional Committee

WE BACK WINNERS

April 18, 2013

Governor Mark Sanford
299 East Bay Street
Charleston, SC 29401

Dear ~~Governor Sanford~~:

Mark

¡Hola! By now you have probably read in the papers that we have decided not to fund your special election campaign. As our spokeswoman Andrea Bozek said, "Mark Sanford has proven he knows what it takes to win elections." And I concur! We all think you're doing such a super job that you don't even need us—your campaign is *en fuego*! And thank goodness for that, because there are so many other special elections that *do* need us. There's the Second District in Illinois, the Eighth District in Missouri, the Second District in Illinois...

No doubt the media will play this up as some sort of cut-and-run maneuver. Typical lamestream media. On the contrary, we have always known you have what it takes to succeed in life. You're a worldly man—heck, *I've* never been to Argentina. You're passionate, and you follow your corazón.

Keep following it.

Warmly,

Greg

Representative Greg Walden, Chairman

P.S. If by some extremely rare chance you are ever back in D.C., let's have lunch. But please contact my office first. Wouldn't want them to think you're trespassing or something!